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OF
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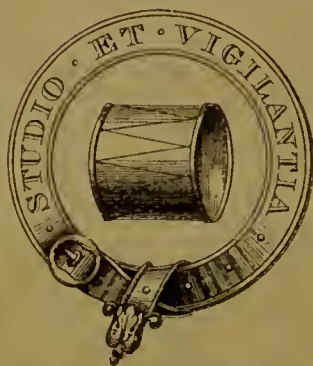
ARTHUR W.
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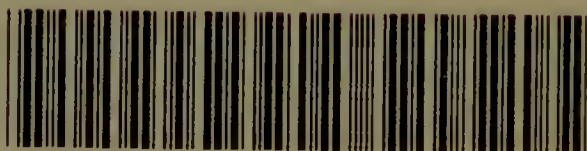
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A BOOK OF BACHELORS



ABRAHAM COWLEY.

From the Frontispiece to his "Libri Plantarum Sex" (1668).

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A BOOK OF BACHELORS

BY ARTHUR W. FOX M.A

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



WESTMINSTER
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DOCTORUM DOCTISSIMO
AMICISSIMOQUE AMICORUM
TANTULUM HOC PIGNUS ET HONORIS
ET AMORIS
ALEXANDRO GORDON
PUDENTER DEDICAT
RERUM SCRIPTARUM
AUCTOR



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Note on the Illustrations.—Of Henry Peacham there is no available portrait, and the facsimile in the text has, therefore, been inserted. For the portraits of Abbot, Coryate, and Boorde, the author is indebted to the kindness of Mr. C. W. Sutton, of the Manchester Free Library, and for the last to the further kindness of the Early English Texts Society.

PREFATORY NOTE

AN out of the way title perhaps demands a word or two of explanation, that the reader may be fully informed of the contents of the book over which it is set. Be it said then once for all, that the present work has no insidious purpose of proving the absurd generalization that marriage is a failure : nor is it designed to play the unchivalrous part of girding at the foibles and follies of the fair sex. The author's reading has chanced to fall upon a number of men of some distinction, who once belonged to that noble army of martyrs, of which he is himself an inconspicuous camp-follower. Whether the subjects of the succeeding sketches would have achieved greater distinction had they hunted in "mixed doubles," or whether their solitary lot enabled them to rise to the summit of their powers, may be a profitable question for metaphysicians. But such an inquiry does not concern us here. Our attention is directed to certain important events of their lives, and not upon the subtle consideration of what they might have been if they had been other than they were. By the unkind partiality of fate some at least of the persons hereinafter to be represented have passed beyond the stage of recollection, and it is the author's pious object to recall to the minds of the living some of the no longer honoured dead. The following pages inevitably partake to a large extent of the nature of a compilation, which has been made with care and at the expense of some labour, but which does not pretend to do more than introduce the reader, as far as possible, to the personalities of the men described. Exact accu-

racy has not been attainable, in spite of much effort; but it is hoped that some of the heroes of the "dead past" may appear in living colours.

It may therefore be useful to briefly characterize the authorities consulted, in order that the reader may be enabled to estimate them at their true value. In this dreary task an alphabetical arrangement has been followed with the view of convenience, in which strict attention has been paid to the editions consulted, without the addition of any description of those which have preceded or succeeded them.

AUBREY, JOHN.

Letters and Lives of Illustrrious Persons (1813), and the fine new edition, entitled *Aubrey's Brief Lives*, edited by Andrew Clarke and published in 1897.

Antiquities of Surrey (1719).

Aubrey must always be read with caution: he is a keen portrait-painter; but his credulous character, not untinged by a taint of spiteful gossip, has a tendency to discount his testimony, if it be unsupported.

ANDREWES, L.

Collected Sermons (1662), with the valuable biographical Funeral Sermon.

Opuscula Posthuma (1629), containing amongst other things the *Tortura Torti* and the *Responsio ad Apologiam*.

Leaders of Religion Series, which contains a valuable biography of Andrewes.

BALE, JOHN.

Illustrium Maioris Britannicæ Scriptorum Summarium, an invaluable collection of biographies, and the first of the kind of English authors. Bale had many prejudices, which interfere with the value of his testimony; but he must always be consulted. The edition used is that of 1569.

BAYLE, PETER.

Dictionary, where there is an excellent account of Scioppius.

BARNES.

Anacreon (1705). A rare and interesting book, abounding in gossip about British poets.

BIRCH, DOCTOR.

Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth (London, 1754.) This is in the main a highly interesting and accurate work, dealing with the last twenty-two years of the reign of Elizabeth.

Court and Times of James I., and *Court and Times of Charles I.* (1849), which contain copies of letters made by Dr. Thomas Birch, and left by him to the British Museum. This is a remarkable and interesting collection of letters, in which the letters are printed in full.

Life of Prince Henry (1760). A work which contains useful information difficult to obtain elsewhere.

BOORDE, ANDREW.

A Boke of Introduction (1541). A work which has been sufficiently described in the following pages.

Breviary of Health (1575), which has also been described in detail below.

BROOKE, BENJ.

Lives of the Puritans (1813). A book which is a useful but not too accurate compilation of works relating to its subject.

BROWN, THOS.

Miscellanea Aulica (1702), which contains some gossip and some facts.

BURNET, GILB.

Life of Bedell (1692). A rare little book, full of information; written in Burnet's usual vivid, but not wholly reliable, style.

BURTON, ROBERT.

Anatomy of Melancholy (1638). The fifth edition of this notable book has been used, because it was the last published in Burton's lifetime. Of modern editions the one published by Messrs. Bell & Sons, and edited by Shillitoe, is by far the best.

BURTON, WM.

A Description of Leicestershire, reprinted 1777. A work which may still be consulted with profit, and which was compiled with great care.

CABBALA (1663). A work containing a choice and valuable selection of letters during the period chiefly of the first two Stuarts.

CAMDEN, WM.

Britannia (1695), translated by Gibson. A work which needs neither description nor commendation.

Camdeni Insignia (1624). A little book containing elegies on the death of William Camden, of great rarity and much interest.

Camden Society No. 12, which contains several letters of interest.

CASAUBON.

Casaubonorum Epistolæ (1709). A collection which throws an invaluable light on the lives of Isaac and Meric Casaubon, and which contains letters to both of the Casaubons, though not in any great numbers.

CHALMERS, ALEX.

Biographical Dictionary. A work of much labour and research, and amply furnished in most cases with a useful list of the authorities consulted by the various contributors.

CLARENDON.

History of the Great Rebellion (1702-1704), Fol. The noble historian is one of the most interesting and at the same time one of the most prejudiced of the writers of English history.

COLLIER, JEREMY.

Ecclesiastical History (1706). A work written by the pen and from the point of view of a non-juror, which is full of information and no less warped by the writer's bias.

COLLINS, ARTHUR.

Sidney Papers (1746, edited by Arthur Collins). A most valuable collection of useful historical documents.

COOPER.

Athenæ Cantabrigienses (1861). A work which was modelled upon the similar work of Antony à Wood and which contains a mine of information more or less accurate concerning the worthies of Cambridge.

CORYATE, THOS.

Crudities (1611). A rare work, which has been sufficiently described below. One of the best copies is one of the treasures of the Chetham Library, Manchester.

COWLEY, A.

Works (1681 and 1700), with a memorial notice by Bishop Sprat.
Poemata Latina (1668).

DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY, which in spite of occasional and inevitable errors remains a monumental testimony to the care of the contributors, and the public spirit of its publishers.

DRYDEN, JOHN.

Miscellany Poems (1696). A curious and interesting collection of poems of different degrees of merit.

FURNIVAL, F. J.

Early English Text Society, Extra Series, No. 10, which contains the best life of Andrew Boorde extant, and on which Mr. Furnival has bestowed infinite pains, the result of which is only marred by the extraordinary style in which he has chosen to write.

Elegies on Paul Viscount Bayning (1638), which has been consulted because Robert Burton wrote one of them.

EVELYN, JOHN.

Diary, with a preface by Mr. Wheatley (1879). A work which is perhaps not consulted as often as might be advisable, on account of its inferior interest to that of Pepys.

FERRIAR, DR.

Illustrations of Sterne (1812). A work which reveals its author's critical sagacity in a marked degree.

FRANKLAND, THOS.

Annals of King James and King Charles I. (1861). A work, though written to correct Rushworth, greatly dependent upon his *Historical Collections*. It contains much information and a few valuable documents.

FULLER, THOMAS.

Anonymous Life (1661). A useful little work, as giving a vivid picture of the times in which Fuller lived.

Abel Redivivus (1650). A collection of useful biographies of eminent theologians edited by Fuller, in part written by him, and in part by eminent divines such as Thomas Gataker and by William Isaacson.

Church History (1655). A mine of information and exact character-painting.

Comment on St. Matthew (1652). A small collection of sermons on the Temptation, the preface of which, as is usual with Fuller, gives indications of his life.

The Worthies (1662). An invaluable collection of biography intended to supplement Camden's *Britannia*.

GOODMAN, BISHOP.

The Court of King James I. (1839), edited by J. S. Brewer, a gossip and useful book, filled with what the Bishop professes to be true accounts of certain scandals of the infamous court of James.

GOSSE, EDMUND.

Seventeenth Century Studies. A brilliant and useful book of discerning criticism.

HACKET.

Scrinia Reserata of the *Life of Archbishop Williams* (1693). A useful but tedious folio crammed with reflections utterly foreign to the subject. Indeed, it is hard to trace the true portrait of the wily Williams through the maze of eulogy and philosophical reflections.

HARWOOD, THOS.

Alumni Etonenses (1797). A useful book, which has, however, fearful and wonderful chronological blunders.

HARRISON, WM.

A Description of England (1577 and 1586-7). An interesting but spiteful book, which requires great caution in its proper use.

HEARNE, THOS.

Benedictus Abbas (1737). A work which contains the history of the aforesaid Abbot of Peterborough, and Boorde's *Peregrination*.

Reliquiæ Hearnianæ (1868). An interesting collection of the stray notes of the great Oxford antiquary.

HEYLIN, PETER.

Cyprianus Anglicanus or *Life of Laud* (1671). A eulogistic portrait of its hero with spiteful comments on his adversaries. Heylin unsupported by other evidence is rarely to be trusted.

History of Presbyterianism (1670), in which the author, with his wonted charity, traces the origin of Presbyterians to "their father the devil." The work contains some interesting facts, but must be used with great care.

HISTORICAL MSS. COMMISSION, *Hatfield MSS.*, Pt. V., cf. also *Report xi*. This is a most useful and accurate collection of historical MSS. in the possession of private families.

HOWELL, JAMES.

Epistolæ Ho-Eliañæ (Ed. V., 1678). Whether all these letters were written at the dates under which they appear or long afterwards, there can be little doubt that in the main they present a truthful picture of the times.

JONSON, BEN.

Works (Moxon, 1853).

Conversations with Drummond, edited by David Laing for the Shakespeare Society, and full of interest.

JOHNSON, SAMUEL.

Lives of the Poets (1779-1781). A work of sometimes sound and sometimes startling criticism, written in Johnson's best and least ponderous style.

KENNET, BISHOP.

Compleat History of England (1706). A useful work, which contains such valuable pieces of contemporary history as Wilson's *History of James* and Camden's *Annals of King James*.

Register and Chronicle (1744). An admirable compendium of many of the events of English history.

LAUD, WILLIAM.

Troubles and Trial (1695). A pathetic narrative of the rigours of the imprisonment of the venerable primate, as told by himself; and edited by Henry Wharton.

L'ESTRANGE, HAMON.

The Reign of King Charles (1654). A curious, though not wholly unfair or inaccurate picture of the times concerning which it was written.

LLOYD, DAVID.

Statesmen and Favourites of England, (1665). A curious little book of many excellencies, but perplexed by grave chronological inaccuracies. It does not, however, merit the contempt which has been showered upon it.

Memoires (1668). A martyrology of the cavaliers.

LOWNDES.

Bibliographer's Manual. (Messrs George Bell and Sons.)

MONSON.

The Last Seventeen Years of Elizabeth (1682). Sir William Monson was Admiral of a ship in both of the Earl of Essex's ill-fated voyages, and he has shown himself a shrewd observer of the men and events of his time.

NICHOLS, JOHN.

History of Leicestershire (1795-1815), a monumental work containing almost every possible piece of history and topography in the county which it describes.

Progresses of James I. (1828), a work marked by the learned compiler's skill, patient research, and for the most part lucid arrangement.

OVERBURY, SIR T.

Works (1856, edited by Dr. Rimbault). A very useful edition, preceded by an admirable though brief life of the unfortunate statesman.

Oxford Historical Society, University Registers. A very useful and admirably edited series, invaluable to the historical student.

PLOT, ROBERT.

Natural History of Staffordshire (1686). A work of much value, in spite of certain inaccuracies caused by the reliance of the author on tradition.

PEACHAM, HENRY.

Compleat Gentleman (1634). This and Peacham's other works are described below.

Gentleman's Exercise (1634).

Period of Mourning (1613).

Truth of the Times Revealed out of one Man's Experience (1638).

The Worth of a Penny (1662 Reprint).

POPE.

Windsor Forest (1720).

PURCHAS, SAMUEL.

Pilgrims (1625), a great and rare work crammed with interesting matter well worth reprinting to day.

RUSHWORTH, JOHN.

Historical Collections, Abridged (1703, etc.) A most useful work to all who need a digest of the larger work of the original compiler, at whom Carlyle foolishly sneers, though greatly indebted to him for information.

SANDERSON, WILLIAM.

The Reign of King Charles (1656), an inaccurate compilation, which, however, deserves consultation for several documents which it contains.

SCOTT, SIR W.

Secret History of James I. (1811), which contains much valuable matter, and, amongst other scandalous chronicles, *Aulicus Coquinariæ*.

Shakespeare Society, Pierce Penniless's Supplication to the Devil, by Thomas Nash, and edited by J. P. Collier, who has made more than one curious blunder.

SMITH, HENRY.

Collected Works (1655), with a biographical preface by Thomas Fuller, written in his best manner.

State Trials (1816).

STRYPE.

Life of Bishop Aylmer (1821, reprinted). An excellent study of the bishop's life.

TAYLOR, JOHN.

Works (1630). John Taylor was the "water poet," who was esteemed the best English verser by the sapient King James.

TERRY.

A Voyage to East India (1777, reprinted). An interesting account of his chaplaincy to Sir Thomas Roe.

TRUTH BROUGHT TO LIGHT BY TIME (1692, reprinted). A curious little tract, of which the author is not finally ascertained. In spite of one serious chronological blunder, it bears the marks of one who knew at first hand the subjects of which he was treating.

WELDON, SIR ANT.

Court and Character of James I. (1650). A terrible exposure of the corruptions of the Court, which it professes to describe.

WINSTANLEY, W.

Worthies of England (1725, 2nd ed.). A useful but by no means reliable series of biographies. Fuller imagines that Winstanley had stolen his own suggested title, but the latter was able to give the greater biographer content.

WINWOOD, SIR R.

Memorials of Affairs of State (1725), edited by Sawyer, and one of the most useful collections of documents on English history.

WOOD, ANTONY A.

Athenæ and Fasti Oxonienses (1813), judiciously edited by Bliss. Where his prejudices would allow him, Wood is an accurate authority for the lives of which he treats.

WOTTON, SIR H.

Reliquiæ (1672 and 1685), edited by Izaak Walton, who has prefixed a delightful character sketch of the diplomatist. The fourth edition of 1685 has been used for the letters to Lord Zouch.

State of Christendom (1657), which has been sufficiently characterized below.

Such is the list of authorities consulted, with a comment upon each of them to indicate, as far as is possible in a single sentence, the comparative value of each. It is not pretended that these comprehend all or nearly all of the authorities for the lives of the eminent bachelors who pass under review. But they have sufficed for the present writer's purpose, and he hopes that the portraits which he has endeavoured to sketch in outline may prove likenesses and not caricatures. He is indebted to the kindness of the editor of *Macmillan's Magazine* for the

permission to use his paper on an *Old World Parson* therein printed as the basis of his study of Henry Smith, while the substance of the papers on Henry Peacham and Andrew Boorde has appeared in the *Manchester Quarterly*, the organ of the Manchester Literary Club. But in each case the studies have been entirely rewritten and greatly enlarged. He is furthermore much indebted to the kindness and courtesy of Messrs. C. W. Sutton and W. R. Credland, librarians of the Manchester Reference Library, for their invariable kindness and courtesy, which have much assisted him in his researches. In conclusion, he hopes that his compilation, such as it is, may help to throw some stray beams of light upon the lives of ten past worthies. Corrections he will gratefully receive; for he realizes how difficult, how almost impossible exact accuracy is in such matters, and he leaves his book to the indulgence of those kindly readers who take some interest in the men and the doings of a former century.

TODMORDEN, *October*, 1899.

ERRATA.

Page 2, line 17, *after school add* ἀντοδιδάκτοι.

- „ 4, in notes 2 and 3, *for* p. 31 and p. 31 *read* p. 27 and p. 30.
- „ 10, note 2, *for* p. 10 *read* p. 92.
- „ 14, note 1, *for* note 2 *read* note 4.
- „ 29, note 1, *for* p. 225 *read* p. 25.
- „ 73, note 1, *for* ccxii. *read* cclxii.
- „ 91, last line, *for* Dickson *read* Dickons.
- „ 111, note 2, *for* p. 287 *read* p. 288.
- „ 347, note 5, *for* p. 509 *read* p. 599.
- „ 363, note 1, *for* pp. xxii.-xxiii. *read* pp. xxvii.-xxix.
- „ 376, note 1, *for* pp. 380-381 *read* pp. 379-380.
- „ 404, note 2, *for* p. 138 *read* p. 130.

wheelles, which together with the driver thereof, a Fly could easily hide and cover with her wings: Besides a Ship with her sailes, which a little Bee could overspread. *Varro* teacheth how small peeces of this nature and subtillest workmanship, may be discerned, that is. saith he, by laying close about them, blacke Horse haire. Of latter times, *Hadrian Junius* tels us that he saw with great delight and admiration, at *Mechlin* in *Brabant*, a Cherry stone cut in the forme of a basket, wherein were fifteene paire of Dice distinct, each with their spots and number very easily of a good eye to be discerned. *Varro de lingua Latin. lib. 6.*

And that the *Ilias* of *Homere* written, was enclosed within a nut, *Cicero* tels us he saw it with his eyes, though *Alexander* thought it worthy of a farre better case, the rich Cabinet of *Darius*. By the statue of *Homere* the ancients usually set a nightingale (as by *Orpheus* a Swanne for the manifold variety and sweetnesse of his voyce, or the continuance or holding out to the last the same sweetnesse: for some are of opinion, that the perfection of Muscicall sounds are to be discerned in the Nightingales notes. *Pliny* reckoneth up sixteene severall tunes she hath, and setteth them to Latine words very properly as unto Ditties, which the translator of *Pliny* hath nothing neere so well fitted in the English which might surely have beene as well done, as I have observed in their notes. *Pliny lib. 10. cap. 12.* But to returne, *Scaliger* (whether in jest or earnest I know not tels *Cardanus* of a flea he saw with a long chaine of gold about his necke, kept very daintily in a boxe, and being taken forth, could skip with his chaine, and sometime sucke his mistresses white hand, and his belly being full, get him to his lodging againe, but this same *Alexander* wittily scoffed. when he gave a fellow onely a bulhell of pease, for his paines of throwing every time a pease upon a needles point standing a pretty way off. *Exercitaz. 3. 361.*

Archimedes to the wonder of all the world, framed a brazen heaven, wherein were the seven Planets with their

THE SCHOOLMASTER

HENRY PEACHAM

“Memini quæ plagosum mihi parvo
Orbilium dictare.”

HORACE, *Epist.* II. i. 70, 71.

“THERE is scarce any profession in the commonwealth more necessary, which is so slightly performed. The reasons whereof I conceive to be these: First, young scholars make this calling their refuge, yea perchance, before they have taken any degree in the University, commence schoolmasters in the country, as if nothing else were required to set up this profession but only a rod and a *ferula*. Secondly, others, who are able, use it only as a passage to a better preferment, to patch rents in their present fortune, till they can provide a new one, and betake themselves to a more gainful calling. Thirdly, they are disheartened from doing their best with the miserable reward which in some places they receive, being masters to the children, and slaves to their parents. Fourthly, being grown rich, they grow negligent, and scorn to touch the school but by the proxy of an usher.”¹ So wrote Thomas Fuller, no mean judge of the principles of education, concerning the pedagogues of his day, and with only too much truth. The worthy divine, though by nature one of the kindest souls who ever lived, still smarted in memory and in person from the too pressing attentions of his earliest tutor, the Reverend Arthur Smith.² This otherwise little-known schoolmaster, who became vicar of Oundle, appears to have had a striking predilection for illustrating the transitive verb upon the—breeches—of his pupils; and his logical training seems to have been confined to the *argumentum a posteriori*! Indeed, Fuller’s remembrances of William Lily, the famous grammarian,

¹ Fuller, *Holy State* (1648), p. 98.

² Aubrey’s *Letters* (Ed. I.), Vol. II. Pt. ii. p. 334.

chastiser of a prime minister, seem by comparison but amiable pieces of considerate kindness. The ferocious tyranny of the schoolmasters of the seventeenth century makes the historian wonder sometimes that they assisted in the production of any scholars of distinction. Peacham paints a vivid and terrible picture of the gentle amenities of the education of those who were subjected to their tender mercies. "Yet have I known," he complains, "these good and towardly natures as roughly handled by our *plagosi Orbilii*, as by Dionysius himself taking revenge upon the buttocks of poor boys for the loss of his kingdom, and railed upon by unmannerly names of blockheads (oft by far worse than blockheads, asses, dolts, etc.), which deeply pierceth the free and generous spirit; for *Ingenuitas* (saith Seneca) *non recipit contemptum*; ingenuity, or the generous mind cannot brook contempt; and which is more ungentlemanly, nay barbarous and inhuman, pulled by the ears, lashed over the face, beaten about the head with the great end of the rod, smitten upon the lips for every slight offence with the *ferula* (not offered to their father's scullions at home) by these *Ajaces flagelliferi*; fitter far to keep bears (for they thrive and are fatter for beating, saith Pliny) than to have charge of noblemen and gentlemen."¹ Truly the boys of the seventeenth century, who were subjected to the rigours inflicted by Ajax Telamon upon harmless sheep, must have suffered sorely under the indiscriminate severities of such a discipline, which was better calculated to prepare them for the austerities of the Flagellant Friars than to inspire them with any abiding love of learning.

Other masters again, remarks the pedagogue, were too lax, and were content to leave their pupils to that valuable branch of ornithology known as birds'-nesting, or to that excellent preparation for diplomacy styled by envious proprietors, who have long forgotten how to climb, orchard-robbing. Others, on the contrary, for fear of such health-giving but hazardous pursuits, kept their scholars all day long "with their faces close to the wall," allowing no time for exercise, and laying about them with painful and unabating energy, as if they were threshing wheat. "I knew one," he says by the way, "who in winter would ordinarily in a cold morning whip his boys over for no other purpose than to get himself a heat; another beat

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, pp. 23, 24.

them for swearing, and all the while swears himself with horrible oaths, he would forgive any fault saving that. I had, I remember, myself (near St. Albans in Hertfordshire, where I was born) a master, who by no intreaty would teach any scholar he had farther than his father had learned before him; as if he had only learned but to read English, the son, though he went with him seven years, should go no further. His reason was, they would prove saucy rogues, and control their fathers.”¹ Such logic speaks volumes for the progressive system of education pursued by the aforesaid dominie, whose scholars were doubtless a credit to their master, to their school, and to themselves. He would be saved much expenditure of mental energy, if the fathers of his pupils were sons of ill-educated country-folk, who might even have been unable to read English.

But our schoolmaster was a man of too much practical good sense to lay down dogmatically any universal rules of teaching. He had taught himself, and knew that systems of teaching were as various as the teachers themselves. His supreme object was rather to impress upon his fellow-instructors the necessity of method than a method to guide them in their difficult occupation. “Nor is it my meaning,” he wisely says, “that I would all masters to be tied to one method, no more than all the shires of England to come up to London by one highway: there be many equally good.”² This judicious pronouncement was doubtless due to his perception of the painful fact that most schoolmasters did use one method, as they employed Lily’s *Grammar* as an universal text-book. Nor, again, had he any desire to tar all contemporary teachers with the same censorious brush. “I invey,” he continues, “against the pitiful abuse of our nation by such, who by their ignorance and negligence deceive the church and commonwealth of serviceable members, parents of their money, poor children of their time, esteem in the world, and perhaps living all their lives after.”³ That Peacham’s censure was no less just than strong, may be seen from the attentive study of the biography of most of the noted men of his day; nay, even Milton himself, in spite of the querulous protest of De Quincy, and in violation of what Colonel Bath would term “the immortal dignity of man,” seems to have suffered from the severe stripes of corporal

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 27.

² *Idem*, p. 31.

³ *Idem*, p. 31.

punishment. Thus driving and not training was the common plan of the education of the youth of the seventeenth century, a practice which cannot be said to be yet obsolete.

Having thus eased his mind in sufficiently forcible, yet by no means too forcible language, anent the instructors, or as he deemed them the destructors, of the youth of his day, Peacham next turns his attention to the ordinary folly of parents and guardians. He condemns, with a schoolmaster's reasonable resentment, the vile treatment of those who were intrusted with the education of the children of the time. In his professional capacity he had had many opportunities of seeing children utterly ruined by the very scanty respect with which their parents treated that luckless victim of caprices, male and female, the private tutor. The fierce language of his condemnation of such short-sighted conduct can hardly fail to remind the modern educationalist of the not yet finally determined governess-problem. "Nowadays," he complains with no less truth than bitterness, "parents either give their children no education at all (thinking their birth or estate will bear out that), or, if any, it leaveth so slender an impression in them, that, like their names cut upon a tree, it is overgrown with the old bark next summer. Beside, such is the most base and ridiculous parsimony of many of our gentlemen (if I may so term them), that if they can procure some poor Bachelor of Art from the University to teach their children, to say grace, and serve the cure of an impropriation, who, wanting means and friends, will be content upon the promise of ten pounds a year at his first coming, to be pleased with five; the rest to be set off in hope of the next advowson (which, perhaps, was sold before the young man was born), or if it chance to fall in in his time, his lady or master tells him. Indeed, sir, we are beholden unto you for your pains, but I had before made promise of it to my butler or bailiff for his true and extraordinary service; when the truth is, he hath bestowed it upon himself for fourscore, or an hundred pieces, which, indeed, his man two days before had fast hold of, but could not keep." ¹ When a butler and a bailiff could have an advowson made over to them in repayment of a timeful loan, it will easily be seen that the patrons of livings were not free from the canonical sin of simony.

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 31.

The melancholy truth of the foregoing description of the painful pleasures of private tutors in Peacham's day, and for long afterwards, cannot be denied by the most enthusiastic panegyrist of the good old times. The learned, in spite of all disadvantages, were supremely learned, while the ignorant were as ignorant as they well could be; nor were learned men themselves easily able to rise in life except by the slippery path of patronage. Many had to wait long years for even the scattered crumbs of royal favour, or ecclesiastical advancement, and many had to keep their light hidden under the bushel of neglect, until death preferred them to a higher station in heaven. In the face of so degrading an estimate of the seventeenth century pedagogues, it was only natural for men of wit and learning to leave the education of the young for the most part to those audacious quacks, whom Peacham condemned with such relentless force. But the broken promises and glib lies of their patrons were not the only insults showered upon the luckless tutors of an unappreciative age; they had the additional and excessive mortification of seeing grooms and gamekeepers held in greater esteem, and what, perhaps, they felt with greater poignancy, better paid than themselves. "Is it not commonly seen," Peacham proceeds, "that the most gentlemen will give better wages, and deal more bountifully with a fellow who can but teach a dog, or reclaim a hawk, than upon an honest, learned, and well-qualified man to bring up their children? It may be, hence it is, that dogs are able to make syllogisms in the fields, when their young masters are able to conclude nothing at home, if occasion of argument or discourse be offered at the table."¹ Under such an educational system, or lack of system, it is a matter of some surprise that any of the youth of the upper classes should have taken so much as a passing interest in learning.

It has cost the people of England years of profound study to discover that, in spite of honest Dogberry, "reading and writing," and less elementary learning do not "come by nature." The mass of our countrymen are sportsmen by nature; nor can it be fairly asserted, even in these more enlightened days, that learning receives an adequate recognition by comparison with that meted out to less laborious pursuits. The great sportsman, John Peel, is known and honoured not without much desert

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, pp. 31, 32.

upon his part, where thousands of men, who have worked far harder and in matters of weightier import, remain utterly unknown. The sombre figure of the dominie does not usually attract the songs of the *tuneful nine*, those beauteous blue-stockings of Parnassus, if such a term may not improperly be applied to those who went bare-foot with a strict application to the poverty of the learned. Poets, save the saccharine Shenstone, do not commonly sing the praises of their instructor, who taught them the not unnecessary use of their letters, though it must be confessed that poems without letters are something of a rarity. But in the seventeenth century matters were in a worse plight; in all but the greater public schools the masters were half-starved, while as tutors in a gentleman's family their lot was even more degraded and less tolerable. Poverty may be endured by a strong man; but insult pierces the stoutest intellectual armour. These unfortunate officials were treated for the most part as mere harmless nincompoops, who were especially created by a beneficent Providence to be the butt of their stupid patron and his drunken guests. Nor could the hapless tutor easily help himself; he must sit at the foot of the table and mix the liquors, and perform, with however ill a grace, not a few menial offices. He must feed his longing soul on future hope, and charm his employer's changeful mood with present flatteries. In short, he must submit to the indignities of his hard lot or starve, and there are few men of so much self-respect as to choose the latter alternative.

With an old bachelor's prejudice against the fair sex, Peacham was inclined to lay much of the fault of the neglect of sound education upon the unwise indulgence of the mother. "I dare not say," he avers; but he does say, and he manifestly believes his accusation to the fullest extent; "I dare not say that it was long of the mother, that the son told his father he was a better man and better descended than he."¹ If the story be true, the boy in question was a forward imp, who showed a precocious insight into the secret mysteries of genealogy. In the same affirmativo-negative strain our schoolmaster continues: "Nor will I affirm that it is her pleasure that the chambermaid should be more curious fitting of his ruff

¹ For this and the two following quotations *vide Compleat Gentleman*, pp. 31, 32.

than his master in refining his manners." That there are some antediluvian specimens of maternity still surviving, who pay more attention to their son's costume than to his character, witness those little martyrs to their mothers' pride in their hair, who are sent with ambrosial curls to school to be the sport of less hirsute Philistines. There is also much truth in a further charge, which the worthy dominie fearlessly makes, or rather makes and withdraws under the cover of a convenient negative, which has the supreme advantage of affirming and denying at one and the same time. "Nor will I affirm," he says, with a smile into his sleeve, "that it is she that filleth the cistern of his lavish expense at the University or Inns of Court; that after four or five years spent, he returns home as wise as Ammonius, his ass, that went with his master every day to the school to hear Origen and Porphyry read philosophy." That this last accusation is drawn truthfully from the tenderness of the maternal instinct, cannot reasonably be doubted. The mothers of Peacham's day, when education was looked upon rather as a graceful ornament than an absolute necessity, would be certain to take more interest in the figure of their sons at the University, or the Inns of Court, than in the learning which they brought away therefrom. Besides, even in our more Athenian age, who is there to whom young Hopeful can so successfully apply for aid to cover his lavish extravagance as to his fond and credulous mother? Her he can persuade that he is working himself to death, a point upon which his more obdurate father is wont to be beyond conviction, and especially so, if he himself have paced the pleasant groves of the Gardens of Academus. Was there not a youth at the latter end of the nineteenth century, who went to consult the master of his College concerning a testimonial? The simple-hearted old official gave him what he wanted, together with the wise advice about his forthcoming examination: "Do your best, and trust in God." The young man was highly edified, not to say amused; since he was conscious that he had been strictly following the latter precept during the whole of his course, and leaving work to take care of itself.

Into a calling hampered by so many difficulties and labouring under such painful disadvantages did Henry Peacham enter, when he left College in 1598. His father, also called Henry, and often confounded with his better-

known son, was a scholar of some distinction, and a good classic, who, in 1577, had published a little quarto manual of oratory, under the quaint and impressive title of *The Garden of Eloquence conteyning the figures of Grammar and Rhetorik, from whence may be gathered all manner of Flowers, Colours, Ornaments, Exornations, forms and fashions of Speech*, 1577, Henry Jackson, London. This curious and excessively rare little book has been assigned by some over-ready critics, in defiance of the registers of the University of Cambridge, to its author's son. But if we may judge of the contents from the title, its directions must have been to a large extent opposed to the wiser instructions of the younger Henry. The latter had supremely sane notions of what oratory ought to be, and he emphatically asserts that a good style is "Not that same ampulious and scenical pomp, with empty furniture of phrase, wherewith the stage and our petty poetic pamphlets sound so big, which, like a net in the water, though it feeleth weighty, yet it yieldeth nothing; since our speech ought to resemble plate, wherein neither the curiousness of the picture, or the fair proportion of letters, but the weight is to be regarded."¹ It is perhaps needless to remark that by weight the author does not mean heaviness, and the foregoing quotation affords an admirable illustration of this important oratorical distinction. Once more he fixes the true principle of public speech as simplicity of style. "Let your style, therefore," he urges, "be furnished with solid matter, and compact of the best, choice, and most familiar words, taking heed of speaking or writing such words as men shall rather admire than understand."² That this wise caution is as much needed as when it was first written cannot be denied. Once one of the most constant hearers of an eminent preacher remarked to the present writer, "I am so fond of his flow of language, and I like it best *when I understand it least*." That many preachers compose their sermons on this principle is a melancholy truth; but sooner or later their very unintelligibility brings its own reward of final failure. The younger Peacham was able to teach the orators of his own day a lesson worthy of their careful attention, and he could hardly have penned a booklet so suggestive of a laboured style as the aforesaid manual. But however that may be, he was not more than two years old at the time when his father published his

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 42.

² *Idem*, p. 43.

book, and that is an age at which he would be unlikely to have laid down any principles of speech, when most of his powers would be bent on acquiring his mother-tongue.

At the time of his first literary venture the elder Peacham was curate of North Mimms, near St. Albans, where his son Henry¹ was born in or about the year 1576. Here John Heywood, one of our earliest dramatists, had cracked his jokes and written his pungent epigrams, which may not have accorded with the standard of "rare Ben Jonson," but which are delightfully witty for all that. Here, too, Sir Thomas More² dwelt in enjoyment of his "fair possessions," and here he is said to have written his *Utopia*. From this curacy the elder Peacham removed to the rectory of the "north mediety of the parish of Leverton, near Boston,"³ a preferment which he obtained in 1597, at a time when his son had almost finished his University career. As he tells us himself, the younger Henry went to school near St. Albans, though at what age is at present unknown. Here he early developed that passion for drawing and painting, which never left him in later life. His schoolmaster does not appear to have adequately appreciated his pupil's peculiar gift. "I remember," complains young Henry, "one master I had (and yet living not far from St. Albans), took me one time drawing out with my pen, that pear-tree and the boys throwing at it, at the end of the Latin Grammar: which perceiving in a rage strook me with the great end of the rod, and rent my paper, swearing it was the only way to teach me to rob orchards; beside that, I was placed with him to be made a scholar and not a painter, which I was very likely to do; when I well remember he construed unto me the beginning of the first *Ode* in Horace, *Edite*, set ye forth, *Maecenas*, the sports, *atavis regibus*, of our ancient kings!"⁴ Truly the passionate and unworthy pedagogue deserved to be linked in the same bracket of the Classical Tripos with a youth of a later period, who trusted to the light of nature rather than to the strict sense of the Latin upon one notorious occasion. With unmistakable indications of an ostrich-like appetite, he treated his master to the

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 27.

² *Idem*, p. 10.

³ *Dictionary of National Biography*, sub "Peacham" (Dr. Augustus Jessopp's article; therefore to be treated with caution as to facts).

⁴ *Compleat Gentleman*, pp. 126, 127.

following free rendering of another *Ode* of Horace: "*Exegi*, I have eaten up, *monumentum*, a monument, *aere perennius*, harder than brass!" Well might the dismayed dominie exclaim, "SIT DOWN AND DIGEST IT, SIR!"

Such a school and so inferior a master were by no means good enough for one of Peacham's varied and considerable abilities, and he appears to have been removed to one in London, where he saw, and doubtless admired, Dick Tarleton on the stage. Leaving the city, he was admitted at Trinity College,¹ Cambridge, at the then unusually late age of seventeen, on the eleventh of May, 1593. Here he drew a map² of the town during his leisure, an achievement which he considered one of no especial difficulty, but of great profit to him who would undertake it. He took his Bachelor's degree in 1594/5, and his Master's degree in 1598. It must have been soon after this date that he left Cambridge and began to turn his attention to teaching. It is uncertain, if he at one time had intended to enter the Church, as his father had doubtless designed. But he never took Orders, a circumstance which is somewhat surprising, when the number and influence of his friends are considered and the strong probability of his obtaining comfortable preferment. But the lot of a country clergyman had little charms for him, before whose eyes dreams of dalliance with the Muses seem to have floated almost from boyhood. That he chose no easier profession, when he became master of the Free School of Wymondham, in Norfolk, may be inferred from what has been already observed; he took little interest in his work, which was ill-suited to his temper and the nature of his talents. He was, be it said with no disrespect to his memory, too much of an intellectual Jack-of-all-trades to settle down to the dreary routine-work of a country schoolmaster. He had considerable skill in the art of making Latin verses,³ and some of his English poems are far above the average of the works of lesser poets. He was a comparatively accurate botanist⁴ for his period, as the indications scattered over most of his

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 27.

² *Idem*, p. 126.

³ *Idem*, Dedication, which runs thus:—

"Ingenio, genio, dum vis generosus haberi,
Ingenua haec discas, ingeniose puer.
Stemma nihil, cultis animum nisi moribus ornes,
Et studeas studiis nobilitare genus."

⁴ *Idem*, p. 11.

works clearly show. His knowledge of heraldry was careful and exact, and it is from the fifth and posthumous edition of his *Compleat Gentleman* (1661), edited with additions by Thomas Blount, that Dr. Johnson took almost all of the definitions of heraldic terms in his Dictionary.¹ He had a great fondness for mathematics, being, as he affirms, "ever naturally addicted to those arts and sciences, which consist of proportion and number." He was not merely an artist with the pencil and the brush, but he attained much skill in the practice of engraving, though few of his productions in this kind are easy to obtain to-day. He learned music in Italy from the great master, Orazio Vecchi,² and among his personal friends were numbered most of the leading musicians at home and abroad. Doctor Burney, who is a sound judge in such matters, asserts that Peacham's criticisms of these great men and their works are penetrating and for the most part just, than which no higher testimony to his musical ability can easily be adduced.

Such a man as this was not in his right place in a school, where he must perforce give his attention to many who would not in the majority of cases be distinguished by supreme intellectual gifts. We can picture him seated in his chair at his desk, with his boys prattling around him in unholy but nevertheless delightful play. He himself, in the meantime, forgetful of the necessity of discipline, might be engaged in some fancy sketch, or perchance busied in turning an ode to some one of influence, whose patronage he hoped to secure. Boys have an unerring instinct of disciplinary weakness on the part of their elders, and they seldom fail to take advantage of absent-minded indulgence. But whatever might be Peacham's capacity or incapacity of scholastic control, he did not forget or lay aside his literary ambition. It was during this period of his life that he published in London, in 1606, his first work, under the comprehensive title of *Graphice, or the most auncient and excellent Art of Drawing with the pen and Limning in Water Colours*. This first edition was ushered into the world under the distinguished patronage of Sir Robert Cotton, and it became popular at once. With the changed title of the *Gentleman's Exercise*, and a huge sub-title, the little work went through various editions in 1607, 1612, and

¹ Lowndes, *sub* "Peacham."

² *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 102.

1634, the last of which was dedicated to Sir Edmund Ashfield, Deputy Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire.¹ It is in the 1612, or third, edition, that the author first tells the reader how to Prince Henry, son of James I., "he presented not long since his father's *Basilikon Doron*, which he had turned a little before into Latin verse; and emblems limned in lively colours, which he graciously accepted."² The date of this publication was 1610, and it was his first attempt to secure the favourable notice of the king. It was directed to James's most vulnerable point, his literary vanity, and doubtless the Royal ears were agreeably tickled by the sound of the cantering in Mantuan verse of his somewhat prosaic Pegasus. The book, too, brought him to the notice of Prince Henry, who so long as he lived was one of Peacham's most efficient patrons.

Whether our author continued to teach or no at this particular time, we have no means of deciding; but probability points to his willing abandonment of the chains of a slavery which had galled him sorely. There is, however, one indication that he had received recognition from the wits of London in 1610-11. When Tom Coryate³ desired the publication of his *Crudities*, he obtained from these mock-heroic commendations of his work, which by the famous names of their authors easily procured him a publisher. Amongst these appear a copy of Latin and a copy of English verses from the pen of Peacham, the former of which is preceded by a copper engraving of honest Tom's famous shoes wreathed in laurel, from his hand. This in itself seems to point to the fact that Peacham was not merely in London, but in high esteem with the circle over which Ben Jonson so arbitrarily presided, and in little less estimation with the publishers of the time. The foregoing piece of inferential evidence is slightly confirmed by the fact that in 1612 he was in London looking after the publication of one of the earliest collections of *Emblems* in our language. The title of this production is, *Minerva Britanna*;⁴ or a

¹ *Gentleman's Exercise*, Dedication (1634).

² *Idem*, p. 7.

³ *Vide* the unique copy of Coryate's *Crudities* in the Chetham Library, Manchester. The mock-testimonials, which precede the text, have no pagination; but Peacham's contribution will easily be found by the engraving.

⁴ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 42, where the *Minerva Britanna* with one of its original devices is mentioned.

Garden of Heroical Devices, furnished and adorned with Emblems and Impresa's of sundry Natures newly devised and moralised by Henry Peacham Mr. of Arts. This thin quarto, with its tedious title, was the natural predecessor of Quarles's *Book of Emblems*, than which it was more original both in matter and in manner.¹ Towards the end of 1612 Prince Henry died, and with his death Peacham's principal hopes of advancement for a time at least faded away. Whether the noble-minded Prince was murdered or not by the machinations of Carr, is as yet a mystery; but in Peacham's elegy there is no trace of evidence to favour the common belief of his contemporaries. Near the beginning of 1613, Princess Elizabeth, James's eldest daughter, was married to that ill-fated Frederick, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, whose folly plunged Europe into the miseries of protracted warfare.

To celebrate the national sorrow for the Prince's death and the general rejoicing over the subsequent marriage, Peacham produced a long, rambling, but in parts extremely beautiful set of poems in English and Latin, entitled *The Period of Mourning in Memorie of the late Prince, disposed into sixe Visions, with Nuptial Hymnes in honour of the Marriage betwene Frederick Count Palatine of the Rhene, and Elizabeth daughter to our Sovereigne*. James was like a child with a new toy, and would listen even to a tuneless instrument, if only it were untuned to his praise; and in this quaint and wandering series of poems there are occasional snatches of music well worthy the attention of wiser men than James. In his first address to the Muse the poet treats his reader to these pretty, if involved and not wholly perspicuous stanzas:—

“Go, Muse, that like Endymion didst but dream
Of golden days in thy despairful night;
And stoodst like Tantale in a silver stream,
That fed thy longing with a large delight;
Ope thy dull eyes, and while that others weep,
Say what thou saw'st, since thou hast been asleep.

¹ Quarles took most, if not all, of his pictures from the emblems figured in the *Pia Desideria* of Hermann Hugo the Jesuit, and he was certainly indebted to the same source for some of the matter of his poems. The quotation cited in *Note 2* proves that Peacham made some of his own designs; nay, his artistic and heraldic skill favours the possibility that all his emblems were his own.

And yet hadst been, had not (Oh, brightest fair!)
 Chaste Cynthia with her favours waken'd me,
 And his dear loss, whose love I shadow here,
 Enforc'd a task of latest piety;
 Else better far we had been silent still;
 And slept unseen upon a peaceful hill."¹

It may here be remarked, in passing, that Cynthia refers to the Princess Elizabeth, in complimentary allusion to her great namesake, who was commonly celebrated under this name, and to whom she bore considerable resemblance. In spite of the difficulties of the foregoing stanzas, they echo with the ring of true poetry, and that too of a kind which does not deserve the malice of time and the failing memory of men.

But the poet soars a more adventurous flight in his *Elegiac Epitaph on Prince Henry*, whose untimely death destroyed the hopes of the nation, and hastened on the later troubles. He sings thus:—

“But, certain soul, thou art but gone
 To thy new coronation;
 Thy presence heaven, thy state a throne,
 Thy carpet stars to tread upon
 Full glory for a crown of gold,
 Outshining this accursèd mould;
 For awful sceptre, or thy rod,
 A palm; thy friends the Saints of God.”²

There is something touchingly simple yet almost sublime in this conception of the Prince's glorified kingdom, which takes the place of the one from which death had borne him away, and the simplicity of the verse matches well with the dignity of the sorrowful theme. There is, too, a rhythmical melody pervading most of the lines, which echoes in the mind with plaintive music. Many better-known poets have become famous for worse poems than this, and some of them are remembered, while Peacham is almost forgotten.

But our bard was no weeping philosopher like Heraclitus of old; he could tune his harp to nuptial songs, and those, too, which would win him favour in two countries at one and the same time. James would duly appreciate and perhaps reward the panegyrist of his daughter, and the poet's cheerful rhymes would charm the empty-headed Elector, whose patronage was little more substantial than the Irishman's famous cheese. The English monarch

¹ *Period of Mourning*, opening stanzas.

² *Idem*, Vision vi.

could do something for the literary aspirant, whereas the favour of his son-in-law was little more substantial than the reflection of the moon in the water. A few lines from the first of the *Nuptial Hymnes* will suffice to illustrate the poet's brighter and gayer manner.

"The huntress in her silver car
The woods again surveyeth now,
And that same bright Idalian star
Appears on Phosphor's veiled brow.
Let earth put on her best array,
Late bathed in eye-distilled showers;
And melt, ye bitter frosts, away,
That killed this forward hope of ours.

With rosemarine and verdant bay
Be wall and window clad in green;
And sorrow on him, who this day
In Court a mourner shall be seen.
Let music shew her best of skill,
Disports beguile the irksome night;
But take, my Muse, thy ruder quill,
To paint awhile this royal sight;
Proclaiming first from Thames to Rhine
Eliza Princess Palatine."¹

There is an undeniable vigour about these merry lines, which distinguishes the whole of the poem, and which formed a fitting expression of the gladness of his people, when James for once had had the sense to bestow his daughter upon a Protestant prince. In addition to the vigorous lilt there are sweet snatches of woodland music, which cannot fail to attract the modern critic, who is wearied alike of the contemporary rhythmical anæmia and the fruitless and often filthy dissertations on the problems of sex.

By this time Peacham had won some reputation for his literary talent, to which his latest poems contributed not a little, and he was now well known both to the Court and to the no less important corporation of booksellers. By the favour of the former, or the recognition of his great gifts, he attracted the attention of the first Earl of Arundel, to the second of whose sons he dedicated at a later date one, if not more, of the editions of his *Compleat Gentleman*. This nobleman, who was the celebrated art collector, made him the governor of his three elder sons during their travels on the Continent during much of the years 1613-1614. In this post he fared better than many

¹ *Nuptial Hymnes*, I.

of his contemporaries, and as far as can be judged he met with an indulgent and appreciative patron. He spent some time in Holland, where he saw much of Sir John Ogle at Utrecht, and observed the passion of the Dutch — whether of ancient family or of mushroom growth—for coats of arms, a passion which still assails the *nouveaux riches* of our own islands at present. In the cities of the Netherlands he saw and revelled in the surpassing skill of the great Dutch artists, and he took pains to become intimately acquainted with such men as Crispin de Pas of Utrecht, and Michael Janss of Delft,¹ the latter of whom he knew to have taken a year to finish a picture. He took his young charges through Flanders, seeing everything which was to be seen, and halting for some time at Brabant.² While he was in Antwerp he saw a picture by the blacksmith artist, Quentin Matsys, either in the Church of St. George or in that of Our Lady, for which the great painter had been offered no less than seven thousand crowns,³ an enormous price for that period. Near Brill he saw or heard of a mermaid's dead body hanging up, where it was in full view of all.⁴ But he does not often descend to trifles of such slight importance as this; indeed, as his works show, his mind was fully occupied with the great scenes and the habits of the peoples through which he passed with his companions. That he was a delightful instructor to them goes without saying, and he would pour out of his own full mind useful observations and wise comments. He had many opportunities during his sojourn in the Low Countries of seeing the Prince of Orange, as well as the noted Spanish General Spinola, who was on the spot to assist in the settlement of the rival claims to the Duchies of Cleves and Juliers. Habituated as he had become to the magnificent raiment of James's splendid but disorderly Court, he was struck by the plainness of the apparel of these two eminent men.⁵ The careful reader of his numerous works cannot fail to be impressed by the exactitude and general justice of his notes upon the habits and principal objects of curiosity of the various countries through which he journeyed.

Of his travels in Germany there are fewer traces and

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, pp. 5, 6, 35, 166, 225.

² *Idem*, pp. 129, 130, 207.

³ *Idem*, p. 137.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 69, margin.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 221.

less detailed narratives than those relating to other lands ; but he seems to have known personally that universal genius, Maurice, Landgrave of Hesse, who was a brilliant musician, fully conversant with ten or twelve languages, a subtle disputant, and an accomplished surgeon.¹ But his passage through the prosperous land of France made a deep impression upon his observant mind. Here he had seen, amongst other curiosities, geographical playing-cards, “the four suits changed into maps of several countries of the four parts of the world, and exactly coloured for their numbers ; the figures, 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, and so forth set over the heads ; for kings, queens, and knaves, the portraits of their kings and queens, in their several country habits ; for the knave, their peasants or slaves.”² Furthermore, the exact descriptions of France and Spain in his chapter “Of Travaile”³ show how observantly he had passed through the one ; and if he did not actually visit the other, as he may have done, how well he had studied its geography. In France he spent some time at the hospitable house of the soldier and scholar, M. de Ligny, where the following instructive incident took place. “One day above the rest,” he remarks, “as we sat in an open and goodly gallery at dinner, a young English gentleman, who, desirous to travel, had been in Italy and many other places, fortunèd to come to his house, and (not so well furnished for his return home as was fitting) desired entertainment into his service. My lord, who could speak as little English as my countryman French, bade him welcome, and demanded by me of him what he could do. ‘For I keep none (quoth he) but such as are commended by some good quality or other, and I give them good allowance, some an hundred, some sixty, and some fifty crowns by the year.’ And calling some about him (very gentlemanlike as well in their behaviour as apparel), ‘This (saith he) rideth and breaketh my great horses ; this is an excellent lutanist ; this a good painter and surveyor of land ; this a passing linguist and scholar, who instructeth my sons,’ etc. ‘Sir (quoth then the young man), I am a gentleman born, and can only attend you in your chamber, or wait upon your lordship abroad.’ ‘See (quoth M. de Ligny, for so was his name) how your gentry of England are bred ; that when they are dis-

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 99.

² *Idem*, p. 65.

³ *Idem*, chap. xix. pp. 229-240.

tressed, or want means in a strange country, they are brought up neither to any quality to prefer them, nor have they so much as the Latin tongue to help themselves withal.'"¹

From France Peacham and his pupils travelled to Italy, and they passed through most of the places of interest in that sunny land. At Venice he noted and admired a great picture by Bellini, which he found hanging in the Council chamber. He visited Assisi, sacred to the memory of the sainted Francis. He spent much time in Florence and Rome, where the buildings, the pictures, and the music charmed his soul. In Rome, a place of some danger to Protestant Englishmen at that time, he had wondered at the great statues of the Bull, Flora, and the Farnese Hercules, which have since been removed to the museum at Naples.² Wherever he had been, he had stored his retentive memory with a great stock of anecdotes concerning his favourite pursuits of music and painting, and his criticisms of the distinguished masters of the sister arts are shrewd, penetrating, and appreciative. He admired the pictures and loved the painters whom he met, while he learned from them and from the musicians much that served to perfect his skill in either art. When he had finished the education of his noble pupils he brought them back to England, and when he had received the due reward of his diligence, he bade farewell for ever to the hated task of teaching in a school, and set up as a man of letters at Hogsdon (now Hoxton),³ near London. The exact date of his settlement here is not known, but it must have been before or in the beginning of 1615, when he published *A most true Relation of the Affaires of Cleve and Gulick* (Juliers), a thin quarto volume, which contains notes of a diary kept on the spot, while Wotton was exercising his diplomatic talents in vain to hold the balance between unequal weights. That Peacham saw the ambassador is certain, while he was in the Netherlands; but he has not left on record his impressions of one no less accomplished than himself. The negotiations broke down in November, 1614, and again later, a circumstance which serves to confirm the date of Peacham's return suggested above.

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, "To the Reader," pp. 1, 2.

² *Idem*, pp. 137, 151, 140, 141, 146, 105, 106, *et passim*.

³ *Idem*, "Epistle Dedicatory," end.

With such leaves from his Continental experiences does the traveller strew his books, so that the attentive reader, who has not been fortunate enough to light upon his autobiography,¹ may cull many passages of his life

¹ *The Truth of the Times revealed out of one Man's Experience* (1638).

This little book is rather a picture of the times drawn from Peacham's experience with an autobiographical seasoning than an autobiography proper. It consists of fourteen unnumbered sections, which are here numbered for convenience. SECT. 1 deals with illustrations *Of God's Providence*. SECT. 2 fills pages 14-26, and treats *Of Schools and Masters*, in which the pitiful picture given in the *Compleat Gentleman* is repeated and emphasized. SECT. 3 speaks *Of the making and publishing of Books*, in the course of which Peacham remarks from personal experience, "If thou gettest but as much as will pay for the binding and strings thou art well enough, the rest thou shalt have in promises of great matters" (p. 34). Michael Drayton left but £5 at his death for his burial (p. 38). Peacham himself never gained *one half-penny* by any *dedication* (p. 39). He spent much time in painting, music, and poetry (p. 41). SECT. 4 treats *Of Liberty*, and fills pp. 42-53. The author remarks (pp. 53, 54) "that he would rather dine at a 3d. ordinary, where he could be free and merry, than at a lord's table, where he must sit mute." SECT. 5 speaks *Of Opinion* (pp. 53-59), in which Peacham notes that he saw written over a house at Breda *Totus mundus regitur opinione* (pp. 53, 54). SECT. 6 speaks *Of following the Fashion* (pp. 59-76), a habit which Peacham despised. He says that he was present at the taking of "Rees in Cleveland, between Wesel and Embrick on the Rhine" (p. 71). SECT. 7 treats *Of Friendship* (pp. 76-89), in which the author speaks well of the friendliness of his foreign acquaintances (pp. 82, 83). SECT. 8 speaks *Of Parents and Children* (pp. 89-116), in which Peacham says that he saw Dick Tarleton when he was a schoolboy (pp. 103-105). SECT. 9 treats *Of Clowns and Rude Behaviour* (pp. 117-126), in which the author remarks that the English lower classes were more civil than their foreign fellows. He tells how, when he lived abroad in a town of boors, he caused to be written over the porch of the Free School a "palindrome," *Subi dura a rudibus* (p. 123). SECT. 10 speaks *Of Travel* (pp. 127-144). Once when Peacham lost his way in a forest in Westphalia, the first man from whom he asked his way entertained him for the night (pp. 128, 129). He recommends the traveller to be silent in strange countries, that his tongue may not betray him (p. 131), and to gain a knowledge of the cost of provisions (pp. 136, 137). SECT. 11 treats *Of a Religious Honest Man* (pp. 145-158). The author carefully distinguishes such an one from the bitter sectaries, whom he had seen at Leyden (pp. 150, 151, 153), and charges the Puritan shopkeepers at home with adopting Puritanism as a means of selling their goods (p. 154). SECT. 12 deals with the value *Of Discretion* (pp. 158-174), and is full of wise advice. SECT. 13 speaks despairingly *Of Common Ignorance* (pp. 175-189). SECT. 14 concludes the book with a high commendation *Of Quietness and Health* (pp. 189-203), in which the author derides violent exercise.

The little book gives a considerable insight into the state of things at home and abroad, as they presented themselves to an unusually keen observer, and is full of quaint pictures of contemporary shortcomings and personal experiences. Its rarity is great, and its size is of the smallest; but it contains matter of no little interest, and is written in Peacham's most pungent and vivacious style.

history from the rest of his works. Peacham has a most engaging frankness, and he rarely fails to illustrate his various adventures with some pointed anecdote or pleasant reference to his numerous friends. Of the details of the rest of his life but little is known, and his movements cannot be accurately traced from year to year. Still, his varied publications afford many hints of his whereabouts and his doings, which throw an interesting light upon the condition of the literary men of his day. In 1615 he was at Hoxton, and produced a rambling poem in English and Latin, with the impressive and explicit title of *Prince Henry revived, or a poeme upon the Birth and in Honor of the Hopefull young Prince Henrie Frederick: First Sonne and Heire Apparant to the most Excellent Prince, Frederick Ct. Palatine of the Rhine, and the Mirrour of Ladies, Princess Elizabeth, his wife*. Amongst much that cannot be called poetry, there are echoes of sweet music, such as would not have disgraced the singerson the Muses' Hill. At Hoxton he was living as late as 1634, rejoicing in the warm friendship of many congenial spirits, and in the favourable notice of not a few of the great of the land. Hither came Richard Sackville, Earl of Dorset, whose death, in 1624, Peacham commemorated in *An April Shower shed in abundance of Tears, etc.* Here that gentle soul, Michael Drayton, rehearsed the sonorous lines of his solemn poetry, which swept along like the rolling of the great deep. Here Ben Jonson poured forth his complaints of wrongs, real or imaginary, into sympathetic ears, waxing vehement over his fancied and easily forgiving his real foes. Some of the most learned and accomplished men of the time found a congenial resting-place around the hearth of the little house at Hoxton. John Selden, the profound scholar, Edward Wright, the mathematician, William Bird, the great musician, and composer of *Non nobis, Domine*, still sung at civic banquets, and Robert Dowland, the no less distinguished lutanist, all found themselves at home around Peacham's hospitable board.¹

To these and to many others he has addressed epigrams in a small octavo volume, published in 1620, and entitled *Thalia's Banquet, Furnished with an hundred and odd dishes of newly devised Epigrammes, Whereunto (beside many worthy friends) are invited all that love*

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, pp. 7, 100, 103, 227, etc.

inoffensive mirth and the Muses. A gentleman himself, Peacham sunned himself at this, the happiest period of his life, in the cheerful society of gentlemen. He cherished with affectionate fondness the tradition that he and his were descended from the Faircloughs¹ of Lancashire, one of whom had been standard-bearer to Lord Stanley at the battle of Bosworth Field, in 1485. He had one brother, who owned an estate at Leverton in Holland, in Lincolnshire, of whom nothing more is known. He pleasantly and profitably spent much of his time in wandering about churches in search of antiquities, in which he took an unfailing but discriminating interest. At Morley Church he saw the arms of Lord Morley on the glass of a window, and at Stow Langton he noted the fair marble tomb which covered the ashes of Sir Robert Ashfield,² the ancestor of one of his patrons. With such tranquil pursuits and the more exciting interests of literary venture did Peacham occupy the prime of his life, and he had been happier than he proved to be, if this peaceful season had continued. He sang, and wrote, and painted, and rejoiced in the sweet sound of music, and cheered his heart with the joyous converse of congenial friends.

During the greater part of this time he was busy with what proved to be his greatest book, the *Compleat Gentleman*, to which reference has been made so often above. It was not until 1622 that this slender but interesting quarto saw the light, and so popular did it instantaneously become that editions were issued in 1626, 1627, 1634, and after its author's death in 1661. The copy from which all the quotations herein made have been taken is the fourth edition, with the autograph and many notes and pencil-marks of the diarist Evelyn. The ink in which he wrote is yellow with age now, and the binder's insane desire for marginal neatness has cut off many words; but enough remains to tell the reader that the book was with Evelyn when he was a student at Balliol College in 1637, and forming his character upon the careful pattern drawn by the old schoolmaster. The past rises before us, as we look at the firm and delicate handwriting and the hastily-made pencil-marks. We seem to see the youth in his seventeenth or eighteenth year, sharing his study with two or three others, and doubtless often wishing his noisy companions far enough, as he endeavoured to fix in his mind

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 202.

² *Idem*, pp. 194, 197; cf. p. 207.

the lessons of one of his favourite books. John Evelyn is dead, and how many have read the delightful pages of his famous Diary: Peacham is twice dead, for who amongst the readers of tawdry trash has even heard of his name?

It will be useful, then, to give a more extended survey of this old book of good manners, because few but antiquaries have read its fascinating pages, and because good manners and high breeding are not so common to-day but that with advantage they might be a little commoner. The first chapter, which deals with the nobility in general, though the author shows a just appreciation of wealth and blood, contains a very wise remark. "Riches," he says, "are an ornament, not the cause of nobility; and many times we see there lieth more worth under a threadbare cloak, and within a thatched cottage, than the richest robe, or stateliest palace."¹ From nobility itself Peacham proceeds to treat of the necessity of learning in princes and the like, of the best time for learning, of the duties of masters and parents, and of similar subjects by way of preparation for his main theme. Then the gentleman is shown how to behave as such at the University, a lesson not as unnecessary as might appear on the surface. The youth is next instructed in the arts of speaking and writing, and a lengthy course of study is set before him. History, cosmography, geometry, the study and if possible the making of poetry, music, antiquities, drawing and painting both in water colours and in oils with very serviceable directions, heraldry with the art and practice of blazoning the respective coats of arms, bodily exercise, reputation and carriage, and in the later editions fishing are set forth as the essentials of a gentleman's education. Such is a brief outline of the contents of this remarkable little book, and it is interesting to note, that at least nineteen years before gentle Izaak Walton had published his *Compleat Angler*, another gentle soul had deemed angling useful to finish the training of his *Compleat Gentleman*.

To illustrate each of these varied subjects, Peacham brings forth a rich and accurate store of learning from his unusually well-furnished mind. He disdains no example, however lowly, to sharpen his invariably wise advice, and he uses pieces of every-day experience with consummate skill. In speaking of geometry, for instance, he somewhat scornfully condemns that waste of valuable time

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 10.

and energy upon trifles, which expends itself upon such profitable occupations as teaching fleas—those tiny gymnasts of nature—to jump. “Scaliger,” he says, “(whether in jest or earnest I know not), tells Cardanus of a flea he saw with a long chain of gold about his neck, kept very daintily in a box, and being taken forth could skip with his chain, and sometimes suck his mistress’s white hand, and his belly being full get him to his lodgings again; but this same *ματαιοτεχνίαν* Alexander wittily scoffed, when he gave a fellow only a bushel of pease for his pains of throwing every time a pease upon a needle’s point standing a pretty way off.”¹ On this passage, Evelyn remarks, on some authority doubtless of sufficient weight, but known only to himself, “one presented to Queen Elizabeth.” We can imagine the royal virgin employing her scanty leisure in playfully feeding that which in its natural or savage state would have provoked language from her lips, such as shall not sully our modest page. The illustration is to the point, and enables Peacham to show the vanity of expending valuable skill upon unprofitable objects.

In his chapter on poetry our schoolmaster shows himself quite at home with his subject, though his list of Elizabethan poets is so incomplete that Evelyn adds thereto such names as those of “Shakspeare, Drayton, Ben Johnson (*sic*), Sherly (*sic*), Beaumont and Fletcher *cum aliis*.”² The incompleteness of Peacham’s list is far from being due to lack of knowledge or want of appreciation of these poets, some of whom were his attached friends. He designedly omits, however, the great poets who were living in his day, in the not unreasonable confidence that every one would be familiar with their works. His renderings of Vergil are so forcible, in spite of their occasional diffuseness and a certain degree of ruggedness, which is alien to the polished lines of the original, that they make the reader wish that he had attempted more than a few disjointed passages. To take one example of his skill in translation, he thus expresses the fear of the coward Aruns in the presence of the warrior maid Camilla:—

“And as a wolf that hath the shepherd slain,
Or some great beast, before the country rise,

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 75, with the note in Evelyn’s writing.

² *Idem*, p. 96 (margin).

Knowing him guilty, through by-ways amain
 Hath got the mountains, leering where he lies,
 Or clapt his tail betwixt his legs, in fear
 Ta'en the next coppice, till the course be clear."¹

Dryden's rendering of the same passage, though it has the undoubted advantage of terseness, is neither more accurate nor more vigorous. It runs:—

"As when the wolf has torn a bullock's hide
 At unawares, or ranch'd a shepherd side,
 Conscious of his audacious deed, he flies,
 And claps his quivering tail between his thighs."²

Those who will compare these passages with one another and with the original Latin, will be inclined to give the palm to the earlier translator, whose vigour is couched for the most part in native Saxon. But Peacham was a critic, too, of much poetic insight, and he notes one delicate touch in Vergil's picture of Æneas, which has escaped the observation of most of those commentators, whose business it is to elucidate the poet's philology rather than his imaginative subtlety. Vergil, he remarks, introduces the episode of Camilla, when his hero is absent from the main battle, and thus preserves him from the disgrace of slaying a woman.³

The chapter on music shows that its author not merely understood the gentle science admirably himself, but that he was so thorough a musician as confidently to assert of the unmusical that "they are by nature very ill disposed, and of such a brutish stupidity, that scarce anything that is good and savoureth of virtue, is to be found in them."⁴ What he would have said had he been alive a century and a half later, and heard Doctor Johnson's definition of music as "the least disagreeable of noises," the present writer is unable to find words to express. Doubtless the arbitrary critic would be condemned to the society of barbarians, and would suffer severely from that very censure which he was so ready to bestow upon others. But keen musician as he was, it is when he comes to art-criticism that

¹ *Vide Æneid*, xi. 810-815.

"continuo in montes sese avius abdidit altos
 occiso pastore lupus magnove juvenco,
 conscius audacis facti, caudamque remulcens
 subjecit pavitantem utero, silvasque petivit."

² *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 87, where *beast* means *bullock*, as in the north of England of bulls and cows indiscriminately.

³ Dryden's *Æneid*, xi. 1183-6.

⁴ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 96.

Peacham appears at his best, and his reader perceives in every line that enthusiasm for his subject which makes him truthfully avouch: "Painting is a quality I love (I confess) and admire in others, because ever naturally from a child I have been addicted to the practices thereof."¹ His extended Continental tour had enabled him to see and to delight in many masterpieces, to seek the friendship of and to reverence many masters. It seems probable that he had seen Rubens and Vandyck, either in England or in their respective countries; he had revelled in the galleries of France, the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy; and his criticisms are quite free from the slightest taint of jealousy, while in most cases they are so sound as to command respectful acquiescence. He saw with the artistic eye, and he was so firmly convinced of the delight and usefulness of painting in itself that he published his *Graphice* "for the benefit of many young gentlemen, who had been his scholars for the Greek and Latin tongues."² Every form of art attracted him, and amongst other accomplishments his skill in engraving was so marked as to gain him the favourable notice of Horace Walpole, who included him in his *Anecdotes of Painting* (1761).

Of the celebrated painters, whom Peacham briefly describes, he has usually some pleasant little story to tell, which throws much light upon their respective characters. Of the Italian artist Bonamico Buffalmacco, for example, he narrates the following amusing circumstance. "Buffalmacco being a young youth, while he dwelt with Taffi (his master), was called up by his master by two or three of the clock in winter mornings to his work, grinding colours or the like, which grieved him much; and be-
 thinking himself how he could make his master keep his bed, he got up in the fields some thirty or forty dorres or beetles, and a little before his master should rise, fastening little wax candles upon their backs, puts them lighted one by one into his master's chamber; who seeing the lights moving up and down, began to quake for fear, committing himself to God with hearty prayer, and covered himself over head and ears in his bed, having no mind to work or awake Buffalmacco. In the morning he asked Buffalmacco, if he had not seen a thousand divels, as he had; who answered, No, for he was asleep, and wondered

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 126.

² *Gentleman's Exercise* (1634). "To the Reader."

he called him not. Called, said Taffi? I had other things to think of than to paint; I am fully resolved to go dwell in another house. The night following though Buffal-macco had put in but only three lights into his chamber, yet he could not sleep for fear all night; it was no sooner day but Taffi left his house with intent never to come into it again. Buffal-macco hereupon went to the priest of the parish to desire his advice, telling him that in his conscience the divel next unto God hated none more than painters: For that, said Buffal-macco, we make him odious to the people's eyes by painting him terrible and in the ugliest shape we can devise: and more to spite him we paint nothing but saints in churches to make the people more devout than they otherwise would; wherefore the divels are very angry with us, and having more power by night than by day, they play their pranks, and I fear they will do worse except we give over working by candle-light. This he spake so confidently and in so demure a manner to the priest, that the priest avouched it to be true, and with great reasons persuaded Taffi ever after to keep his bed; which being published about, working by candle-light was left through the town ever after.”¹ It is quite obvious that, schoolmaster as he had been, Peacham enjoyed Buffal-macco's ruse as much as Buffal-macco himself, who must have seen with a thrill of intense delight his master sweating under the bed-clothes.

The chapter “Concerning Fishing”² is more entertaining from the quaint simplicity of its language than from its actual humour; but it is pervaded with a sound understanding, and with a tranquil enthusiasm admirably suited to its subject. Here, as in most of the subjects which he handled, Peacham showed himself a master of his art, and the advice which he offers is as practical to-day as it was when it was first uttered. He gives an account of each of the common fish, with careful directions for making a suitable bait, and instructions as to the best time to angle for each. Speaking of the tench, he says: “The tench is a fish that ever loveth the bottom of rivers, where the ooze or mud is thickest; the best angling for him is in the height of summer, for at other seasons he bites more sparingly; the baits which delight him are pastes very sweet, the browner the better; also at the

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, pp. 144, 145.

² *Idem*, pp. 251-255.

great red worm.”¹ Most anglers will admit the truth of the description and the general seductiveness of the baits; nor will they be inclined to dispute his characterisation of the “seasons which are naught to angle in, as violent heat of the day, high wind, great rain, snow and hail, thunder, lightning, or any wind that bloweth from the east, land-floods, and thick waters, the falling of leaves into the water and such-like impediments, which are enemies to anglers.”²

With such quaint anecdotes and wise suggestions like a prudent master does our author season his discourse, so that he is never dull, and the prudence of his advice is made the more effective by the humour of his illustrations. His story never flags, and his ideal gentleman is so fine an example of the class, that it can excite no wonder that such a man as Evelyn had formed his character upon this curious yet delicate pattern. If the book be judged by this result alone, it can scarcely miss its true appreciation; for that series of precepts, which can make a man a courteous and proper gentleman, highly accomplished without any false vanity therefor, a true patriot according to his lights, a just and pious man without a taint of cant or a touch of hypocrisy, cannot fail to command respect in these busy days, when high breeding is so rare and the careful study of unmixed rubbish is so prevalent. In short, no attentive reader of the *Compleat Gentleman* can peruse the pages of the thin, time-worn quarto without feeling that the author is both a very fine gentleman himself, and that he shows much capacity for teaching others the difficult lesson of imitation. But the importance of the little book does not end here; it has taken its part in the formation of English prose, in a manner not easy to be over-estimated. It was the pocket companion of men like Evelyn, and well known to the great writers of the seventeenth century. Though some of the sentences are long, the style is never heavy; and its brightness and quiet humour, as well as its transparent clearness, have had their little-recognised share in the development of what is perhaps the most powerful vehicle of English thought.

At this period of his literary popularity Peacham must have been often at Court, where his loyal poems had given him a favourable introduction. That he would share in

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 254.

² *Idem*, pp. 254, 255.

the admiration felt by those who knew him of the first Duke of Buckingham, goes without saying; but that he was in any way dependent upon the fickle favour of this conspicuous courtier does not appear, though probability points in this direction. The Duke, having himself only a slight tincture of letters, was fond of posing as the patron of literature and its disciples, and his restless vanity was continually tickled by the outspoken praises of hungry dependants of this kind. Be that as it may in Peacham's case, our schoolmaster was certainly in the habit of haunting the Court, and even of dining in the royal presence upon occasion. "I have never drawn any more truly," he says, "than when they have been busy in talking, at dinner, viewing something or other, and in this manner I have often taken his Majesty, sitting at dinner, or talking with some of his followers. I have many times wondered why I could among so many never find any true picture of his Majesty, or that did anything near resemble him; I know not, but generally in his picture I find two principal errors, the one in the complexion and hair, the other in the mouth, which commonly they draw with a full and great nether-lip very apparent, wherein they commit the chiefest error; which good observation having avoided, I have drawn him often with my pen and ink only upon a fair piece of paper in an hour, more true and like than the best pieces in oil about the town."¹ Whether James was quite so unconscious that his portrait was being taken or not, as Peacham would have us believe, may well be doubted; but the incident itself gives a curious insight into the somewhat slovenly Court-life, when James I. set the pattern of ungainly indecorum.

Peacham was not idle during the sunshine of his prosperity, and he published, in 1638, a collection of anecdotes chiefly classical, and told with his customary vigour. Its elongated title was evidently designed to catch the eye of a possible purchaser, when the title-page of a book was the chief, if not the only, means of advertisement. Though it was but a tiny volume printed in duodecimo, it rejoiced in the descriptive designation of *The Valley of Variety, a Discourse for the Times, containing very Learned and Rare passages out of Antiquity, Philosophy and History*. That he loved a good story with all his heart, may be seen from the majority of his works; and more than once he

¹ *Gentleman's Exercise*, p. 225.

notes with approval the zest which such pieces of wit give to conversation both during and after dinner. He gives several examples in this kind, of which the following will suffice to show the sort of mirth with which our forefathers were wont to be tickled. "A plain countryman, being called at an Assize to be a witness about a piece of land that was in controversy, the Judge calling said unto him, Sirrah, how call you that water that runs on the south side of this close? My Lord (quoth the fellow), *our water comes without calling*."¹ It is a collection of stories of this kind, pointed, serious, pathetic and witty by turns, that Peacham has set together in his *Valley of Variety*, which probably served as a help to conversation, and in part as a jest-book for many years after its first publication.

An ardent, not to say indiscreet, Royalist, and endowed with an intense dislike of Puritanism,² he brought down upon his head the wrath of the City of London by the publication of a little quarto in 1639, to instruct his restive fellow-countrymen in *The Duty of Subjects to their King and Love of their native Country, In Two Books*. The plain-spoken language of this little tract, its extreme loyalty and its irritating appearance of common sense probably cost Peacham his most availing patrons, who purchased his books. It was at this time, when he was already advanced in years, that he appears to have lost his present means of subsistence, and fallen into the direst straits of poverty. Tradition has no doubt truthfully reported that he was compelled to support himself by writing little pamphlets, which would be sold for no more than one penny each. Of these the most noted are: *A Merry Discourse between Meum and Tuum*, 1639; *A Dialogue betwene the Crosse in Cheap and Charing Cross comforting each other, as fearing their Fall in these uncertaine Times, by Ryhen Pameach*, 1641. On the latter of these two pungent productions, two points may be noticed: first, that it was Peacham's practice to reverse the syllables of his name on his later pamphlets; and secondly, that the pamphlet in question is chiefly prized by antiquaries for the rude old engraving of the said crosses upon the title-page, which is the only surviving representation of them as they originally were.

¹ *Compleat Gentleman*, p. 225.

² *Gentleman's Exercise*, pp. 12, 13, *et passim*.

In 1642, when the time was rife with great political and theological excitement, Peacham brought out, amongst other things, *The Art of Living in London*, a richly humorous, if at the same time pathetic little tract. The same year he produced *A Paradox in Praise of a Dunce in Smectymnus*, which is perhaps the rarest of his productions; and last, but not least, he published that able pamphlet, with a title far more alarming than either its length or its contents. It is called *The Worth of a Penny, or a Caution to keep Money, With the Causes of the Scarcity and the Misery of the Want thereof, in these hard merciless times, As Also how to save it in our Diet, Apparel, Recreations, etc. And also what honest Courses men in want may take to live*. This pithy tract, which contains no more than thirty-three pages, sheds a lurid light upon the poverty of its author's last year of life; yet it is brightened by cheerful hope and flashes of sparkling wit. But when the author of a work bearing such a title, derives penny from the Greek word *πενία*, or poverty,¹ the observant critic, whose keen ear can catch the undertone of human misery beneath the merry sound of human laughter, will readily perceive how scarce were these coins of penury with the old worthy, who, when old and worn and feeble, was able to keep a hopeful heart in an often hungry body. The little work was dedicated to Richard Gipps, "eldest son of one of the Judges of the Court of Guildhall, in the City of London."² Let us hope that the comfortable father gave the starving author at least a bellyful for the compliment to his son. The pamphlet itself is full of wit, common sense, prudent counsel and quiet humour. Sometimes the author breaks out into fierce and scathing satire against certain vices, such as extravagance, parsimony and the like, and the impetuosity of his denunciatory powers carries the reader along like a flood.

On one occasion, after denouncing the follies of the spendthrift and declaring that covetousness, from its tendency to hoard and keep out of circulation money, was one of the causes of the scarcity of that invaluable article of commerce, he proceeds to paint the picture of the covetous man with no flattering brush. "The covetous person," he asserts, "is acquainted with none of these

¹ *The Worth of a Penny* (reprinted 1662), p. 19.

² *Idem*. Dedication.

(that is, the vices of the spendthrift), for instead of satin he suits himself with sacking; he trembles as he passeth by a tavern-door to hear a reckoning of 8s. sent up into the Half Moon for wine, oysters and faggots; for his own natural drink (you must know) is between that the frogs drink and a kind of pitiful small beer, too bad to be drunk and somewhat too good to drive a water-mill. The haberdasher gets as little by him, as he did by an old acquaintance of mine by Lynn in Norfolk, who, when he had worn a hat eight and thirty years, would have petitioned Parliament against the haberdashers for abusing the country in making their ware so slight. For the shoemaker, he had as little to do with him as Tom Coryate had;¹ for sempsters, it is true that he loves their faces better than their fashion. For plays, if he read but their titles on a post, he hath enough.² Ordinaries he knows none, save some of threepence in Black Horse Alley, and such places. For tapsters and hostlers, they hate him as hell, as not seeing a mote in his cup once in seven years. This miserable man supped his man and himself at the Inn for a quart of milk." The extreme force of this piece of delineation of character, few will deny; it is as vigorous as Theophrastus in his happiest mood, and the covetous miser, from whose niggardliness Peacham had probably suffered more than once in his last days of poverty, is mercilessly held up to the hatred and reprobation of all. Every additional descriptive touch adds something to the dramatic satire of the whole, and the critic cannot help feeling confident that the satirist was holding up to ridicule some miser of his personal acquaintance. The portrait is drawn to the life, and it lives in the mind of the appreciative reader.

Another frequent cause of poverty our author asserts with perfect truth to be that extravagance, which was largely due to the vocal exercises of scolding jades. "Many also there are," he says with a touch of acrid venom on his pen, "who having been born to fair estates, have quite undone themselves by marriage, and that after a twofold manner. First by matching themselves without

¹ For *Coryate*, *vide infra*, pp. 244 *et seqq.*

² *The Worth of a Penny*, p. 3. At this point it may be noted that the usual practice of advertising new plays was to put up their titles, with a list of performers, sometimes printed and sometimes in manuscript, upon the posts near the theatre.

the advice of parents or friends in the heat of youth, unto proud, foolish and light housewives, or such *perfect linguists*, that one were better take his diet in Hell¹ than his dinner at home. And this is the reason so many of their husbands travel beyond the seas, or at home from town to town, from tavern to tavern to look for company; and in a word to spend anything, live anywhere save at home in their own houses."² It is interesting to note the fact that there were some wives of intermittent or unintermittent eloquence in Peacham's day, whose vagaries he viewed with all an old bachelor's somewhat selfish horror. That he had an observant eye as well as a sympathetic ear cannot be denied; nor does his plainness of speech attempt to gloss over the excessive use of that gift of tongues sometimes confined by envious man to the softer sex alone. Had any of the aforesaid female orators met with their satirist in a quiet place, there can be little doubt that they would have treated him as Pentheus was handled by the infuriated Bacchanals.

Though this the last year of his life was gloomy beyond all question, Peacham was able to keep up his flagging spirits by merry jests, which have now and then, as indeed was only to be expected, the sub-acid smack of penury. As has been said, he had an especial horror of shrews, in which he is by no means alone, and few of his works are destitute of some caustic allusion to their too assertive virtues. How he as an old bachelor could have any intimate knowledge of their peculiar gifts, it is not easy to decide. Furthermore he shows a perception of the rights and wrongs of economics, before the expiring Manchester School (appalling thought!) had even entered into the minds of his fellow-countrymen. Thrift he recommends with much insistence, though we cannot discover that he had practised that necessary virtue while he had the opportunity; but he is careful to point out the difference between prudent thrift and penurious parsimony. He wandered about from house to house, earning a scanty pittance by his pamphlets, or a dinner by his quips. A more painful, not to say degrading, office for one who had deserved well of his country, it would be hard to find; and that he was able to bear his sufferings with such brave endurance, speaks much for his kindly

¹ I.e., the tavern near Westminster Hall, with a hidden reference to the other place.

² *The Worth of a Penny*, p. 10.

disposition. Some of his jests have survived, though their author has long been forgotten, to become the mirthful capital of a forgetful generation, and like old wine, though they have lost some of their local colouring, they have gained in spirit and in piquancy. A good thing once spoken is seldom entirely spoken in vain, and some of the old schoolmaster's good things reappear from time to time at the distance of two and a half centuries. There is a budget of witticisms in the *Worth of a Penny*, some of which are by no means unworthy of preservation in this age of so-called *Comic Papers*, which sometimes have an aroma of the common sewer, and more often the flatulent flavour of long-opened soda-water. They may have lost their sparkle to those whose attempts at humour are more remarkable for their breadth than for their nicety. But to the lover of the quaint conversation of an older period they reveal the buoyant spirit of a man unsubdued by the trials of ill-fortune and the stress of unhonoured age. In his jocose enumeration of the various objects which may be obtained for a penny, he says: "For a penny you may see any monster, Jack-anapes, or those roaring boys the lions.¹ . . . For a penny you may have your horse walked and rubbed after a long journey; and being at grass, there are some that will breathe him for nothing. . . . For a penny doubled a drunkard may be guarded to his lodging, if his head be *light* and the evening *dark*. For a penny you shall tell what will happen a year hence (which the Devil himself cannot do), in some Almanack, or other rude country. . . . For a penny you may search among the rolls, and withal give the master good satisfaction, I mean the baker's basket. . . . For a penny you may get as much wood of that tree, which is green all the year and beareth red berries, as will cure any shrew's tongue, if it be too long for her mouth, viz. a holly wand."²

These simple and straightforward jests may not suit the jaded palate of modern humour any more than a homely dish would tickle the taste of an epicure. But the echo of their quiet mirth sounds in the soul of him who can truly penetrate into the life and spirit of the past, and who can sympathise with the commonplace

¹ In the reign of James I. there was a kind of Mohawk Club known by the name of the *Roaring Boys*.

² *The Worth of a Penny*, p. 21.

dulness of those somnolent country-houses of our forefathers, when there was no daily press, to say nothing of the perennial freshness of *Punch*. To entertain a man who, in spite of his privations and involuntary fasting, was able to shoot the flashes of his wit across the mirk of twilight over a humming cup of old October, was a privilege which we can scarcely appreciate at its true value to-day, when every means, legitimate and illegitimate, is employed to set in action our risible muscles. Our forefathers were simpler in their tastes, and perforce content with less spicy dishes, than their more fortunate descendants; and we can imagine that in all houses, except those of the covetous, whom he has described in such scathing language, Peacham would be a welcome guest gladly received and reluctantly suffered to depart at nightfall. Whatever the later critic may think of his witticisms, the most captious of the tribe cannot but admire the man, who in bitter want could yet crack jokes with an aching heart, to say nothing of an aching void. Those who have tried the cheerless task know how intolerably hard it is, and they will not be inclined to overwhelm with too fastidious criticism that brave and cheerful spirit, whom no adversity could daunt and no privation could plunge into despair.

But the influence upon our English prose style by these at first sight trivial pamphlets cannot be lightly passed over; the writer was compelled both to make himself understood and to charm the taste of his hearers. His language was therefore pithy, and his points comparatively obvious; his theme was interesting, and, what is more, handled in an interesting fashion, in order if possible both to gain and to keep his readers. The long sentences of more elaborate treatises and the cumbrous methods of expression of the learned were abandoned, and a light, popular style was sought and in Peacham's case obtained. The popularity of his tracts was great, though their profit was small; and many a master of prose, like Lord Clarendon, and possibly John Milton, read and admired their pungent wit. Nay, Milton in himself, in his much bepraised *Areopagitica*, was wholly unable to say so much in so few words as was his almost unknown predecessor. The abiding influence of Peacham's method of writing and the happy turns of his expression have never been duly appreciated. The whole troop of pamph-

leteers of the first half of the seventeenth century has been grossly neglected by the critics of style; hence the key to the development has been missed. The debt to their predecessors has remained unacknowledged by those whose way has been paved before them, and those who wield the pen of prose with so much and so justly admired a facility have forgotten the humble toilers, who taught their language not merely to be articulate, but to be pregnant with expression at the same time.

In the early days of 1643 the old and weary scholar passed away, suffering the cruel pangs of griping penury with tranquil fortitude, and that at a very time when his books were running through various editions and enriching the booksellers of a less scrupulous age than ours. The grim earnestness of the prevailing Puritanism was furthermore utterly opposed to the lighter vein of his pithy satire and his cheerful mirth. Those who listened to sermons as remarkable for their length as their power, were little disposed to spend their leisure in reading the works of one whom they regarded as a frivolous trifler. They had other and weightier matters to occupy their attention, and they forgot that the mask of the jester often hides the face of Truth herself. Peacham was no idle jester; he wrote with a purpose in the best sense of the word, and he deserved higher esteem and fuller recognition than he received. But his loyalty to a discreditable and discredited Court, in which he had once been for a brief space a not unwelcome guest, was ill-calculated to win him the affection or even just appreciation of the ruling powers of the City of London. The ministers, who were quite as earnest in political denunciation as in the salvation of souls, held supreme sway over the public mind, and the warm adherent of a waning Church had little to commend himself to a tribunal so reverend and so severe. But for all his hard fate, for all his poverty and affliction, he could still smile at Fortune's frown, and he fought his lonely battle with a right cheerful spirit. He was a man before all else, and he quitted himself like a man. His sympathy with the harmless pleasures and pursuits of his kind was boundless, and he never hesitated to express what he thought and felt in his writings. He lashed his political and theological opponents with much force and hearty good-will; he satirised the positive vices and the more subtle hypocrisies, which he saw around

him, with pitiless plainness and unfaltering constancy, and he had almost to starve for his pains. Yet he had proved himself a notable man in his day; as a schoolmaster he did much to soften the rigours of discipline, which were the discredit of his contemporary pedagogues, and as an author he has left behind him treasures of compacted wit and wisdom, with snatches of sweet woodland song, which do not deserve the hard fate of "dull forgetfulness." As a man who proved himself a finished gentleman, and who contrived to make some others gentlemen too, he merits grateful recognition. But, above all, he has fairly earned the honour of posterity, as one who could bear the heavy burden of a wintry old age with a sunny spirit and an indomitable courage.

"In a word," he says finally, "for a conclusion, let every one be careful to get and keep money. Know the worth of a penny; there is no companion like the penny; be a good husband, and thou wilt soon get a penny to spend, a penny to lend, and a penny for thy friend; and since we are born, we must live. *Vivions-nous*, let us live as well, as merrily as we can in these hardest times; and say every one of us, as Sir Roger Williams, that brave soldier, said to Queen Elizabeth, when he wanted pay for himself and his soldiers: Madame, I tell you true, we will be without money for no man's pleasure."¹ So Henry Peacham passed away, setting his face against the tyranny of fortune almost to the last; and it remains for those who are born in a happier age, to pay his cheerful spirit the meed of honour so long withheld and which he has so richly earned.

¹ *The Worth of a Penny*, p. 33.

THE PHYSICIAN

ANDREW BOORDE

“ Ei derepenti tantus morbus incidit.

Eibo atque arcessam medicum iam quantum potest.”

PLAUTUS, *Menaechmi*, V. ii. 121, 122.

THE history of origins always involves its own peculiar charm, and the investigation of the ultimate source of familiar expressions is of especial interest to the more commonplace inquirer as well as to the student of folklore. Many of the curious customs and no less curious personages of antiquity are thereby traced home, and the men of long ago are found to bear a close resemblance to their later successors. Civilization has softened some of the acerbities which our forefathers were content to endure ; but the men themselves and their habits have suffered less change than might have been expected. They had similar troubles to endure with their more favoured descendants, and they endured them much in the same manner. They laughed when they were pleased, and they grumbled, as only an Englishman can do, when they met with unpleasant occurrences. They drank more certainly, and they ate perfect prodigies of cookery, such as the weaker digestions of a later age could not have masticated. They were less cleanly in their habits, and as a natural consequence they were afflicted with more numerous and more serious diseases ; the great problems of sewage concerned them little, and their nostrils were far less sensitive than ours. They deluged themselves with perfumes, in order to counteract odours of more pungency, such as ordinary cleanliness might easily have avoided. But they lived, and ate, and drank, and laughed, and grumbled, and swore, much as the men of to-day are doing now. They had less light, and it may be less enlightenment, than fall to our portion ; but in their own

The treatyse answer- rynge the boke of Berdes,

Compyled by Collyn clowte, dedy-
catyd to Barnarde barber
dwelling in Banbery.



*From the reprint of the Early English Text Society, by kind permission of
Dr. Furnival, who notes that the central figure is not a portrait of
Boorde, but a stock engraving.*

fashion they lived happily, with some mirth and no little grumbling. They were Englishmen in all essentials, and it is to their sturdy strength and hardy constancy that we owe most of our present-day comforts.

But the subject of the following pages is not so much the habits of the men of long ago as an account of the life and writings of a man of no mean renown in his day and for long afterwards. Nor can an introduction to the old original Merry Andrew, the patriarch of the tribe, fail to be welcome to his modern and less learned representatives and their dupes. Authorities differ widely as to the private character and personal attainments of Andrew Boorde, who has lent what the immortal Doctor Pangloss would call his "sponsorial appellation," though not his "patronymic designation," to his more or less faithful imitators. John Bale, the Protestant Bishop of Ossory, has few good words to say about this eminent Romanist; nor does he appear to have been consciously endowed with a sufficiently keen sense of humour to fairly appreciate so whimsical a personage. Besides, the Protestants and Catholics of an earlier time are seldom to be trusted, when they talk scandal of one another; nay, even in our own scrupulously impartial era a prudent historian would not willingly commit a panegyric of the Pope to the tender mercies and the plain-dealing of an Ulster Orangeman. Where evidence is conflicting, the impartial inquirer will do well to exercise the subtlest powers of his discrimination before uttering a definite pronouncement; nor will he find many past worthies in whose careful portraiture wise discrimination is more necessary than in the case of Boorde. Prejudice is only too apt to usurp the legitimate place of truth from its forceful dogmatism and its passionate plausibility; and prejudice has been the dominant inspiration of theological controversialists from the beginning. It remains, therefore, for the wary critic to endeavour to arrive at a sound estimation of a much maligned personage from a painstaking study of the few facts and scanty indications which are left to faintly illustrate his character and the course of his life.

Andrew Boorde was born in or about the year 1489, in the reign of the prudent monarch Henry VII. He himself tells his readers, in his now excessively rare *Peregrination*, that his birthplace was Boorde's Hill, in Holms-

dale,¹ in the county of Sussex. Later biographers, who on such points are of necessity possessed of more accurate information than that of the person most concerned, persevere in asserting that he first saw the light at Pevensey. The mistake—for mistake it is in spite of its advocates—probably arises from the fact that Boorde's father had a small estate near the latter village, to which he may have retired a short time after the birth of his son. Be that as it may, Boorde's Hill stands about two miles north-east from Hayward's Heath station, in the centre of a dale, which has lost its original name of Holms-dale. Here there remains an old house,² or at least remained up to within the last few years, which has been the residence of generations of Boordes dating from 1569, when one named Stephen, whose name is carved on a beam therein, lived there. The aforesaid Stephen in all probability built the present mansion on the site of the older house, in which Andrew Boorde was born. As soon as he was old enough Andrew was entered at Wykeham's School in Winchester, from which he removed to Oxford somewhere about the year 1502/3, though the College to which he was attached is unknown.

How long he stayed in this his first sojourn at the University does not appear, but it could not have been long. His restless disposition and his native high spirits were deeply tinged with an asceticism which prompted him to enrol himself a brother of the Carthusian Order, where he must have found himself completely out of harmony with his surroundings. He settled, however, in one of their monasteries near London, where he remained some considerable time. He was under age when he entered the brotherhood, which he seems to have joined under the over-mastering influence of some unknown monk. But the unbending rigidity of the regulations and the resolute repression of every outbreak of genial animal spirits must soon have almost suffocated a man whose temper was naturally lively, and whose whimsical humour could ill brook the petty restrictions of severe discipline. The fixed hours for prayer, the regular succession of fasts, the orderly rotation

¹ Vide Hearne's edition of the *History of Benedictus Abbas Petroburgensis*, Vol. II. p. 777.

² Early English Text Society Extra Series, No. 10, edited by F. J. Furnival. Introduction.

of daily services, the round of precise duties, the fixed periods of solitary meditation, and, above all, the strict restraint of speech must have provoked all the natural man in one of Boorde's restless temperament. Hence at some time unspecified he left the monastery, doubtless to the unfeigned regret of such of the brethren as were not so dead to human instincts as to scorn harmless witticisms and an innocent love of mirth. He next returned to Oxford, where he studied medicine with some success; but the dates of his coming back to his old University, and of his sojourn there, cannot be affirmed in the absence of evidence.¹

He must have still retained his Carthusian Orders, or at least that rank in them to which he had already risen, for it was not until the year 1534 that he actually received dispensation from the extreme rigour of his vows. He did not entirely abandon the austerities, which had once been compulsory to him, but continued to observe some mortifications in dress and diet, until death set him free. In 1521, as may be seen from a letter of his written fifteen years after this time to Thomas Cromwell,² he was appointed Suffragan Bishop of Chichester; but by some means he was suffered to leave the duties of this uncongenial office utterly undischarged. It could not have been long after this date that, inspired by his restless mind, he set forth upon his travels. He journeyed to a great distance from home and through many lands, carefully noting much that he saw. "I have travelled," he says, "round about Christendom and out of Christendom . . . Europe, and a part of Africa."³ That he in no way exaggerates the extent of his wanderings may be seen from his narratives of his experiences in most of the countries of Europe, in Barbary, Turkey, and Egypt, which are to be found in his *Boke of Introduction*. In almost all of these varied lands, and in many of their cities, he tells what he himself saw, while he describes their familiar features with the general accuracy of one who knew them well. That he encountered many serious risks in

¹ Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses* (Bliss), Vol. I. col. 60. For the chief part of the foregoing particulars see the whole article.

² E.E.T.S. (E.S.), p. 58, *Letter V.*, which was written before April 1st, 1536, and says, "I was also 15 years passed dispensed with the religion by the Bishop of Rome's Bulls, to be Suffragan of Chichester, the which I did never execute the authority."

³ *Boke of Introduction* (1542), chap. vii., "The Author's Travels."

his solitary journeyings cannot be doubted. Travelling was by no means safe during the latter half of the sixteenth century; national prejudices, brigands, perils by land and perils by water could hardly fail to fall to his portion, and he showed an unusual degree of courage, joined with curiosity, in attempting to visit the non-Christian lands.

While he was engaged in this tour he drew up a handbook to Europe, a vast undertaking for a single person at that period, which he tells us with natural complaining was lost by his lending it to "one Thomas Cromwell at Bishop's Waltham, eight miles from Winchester."¹ The loan of his valuable manuscript was the beginning of Boorde's acquaintance with the distinguished Minister of Henry VIII. Their first meeting must consequently have taken place before 1528, when Cromwell entered the service of Cardinal Wolsey, and thus began to make his influence felt in the councils of the land. Had he been in the full bloom of his power as Vicar-General, our physician could scarcely have ventured to style him simply "one Thomas Cromwell." This passing mention, therefore, serves the double purpose of dating Boorde's probable return from abroad, and of the writing of the particular passage quoted from the *Boke of Introduction*. He brought back with him a competent knowledge of Latin and Greek, a moderate acquaintance with several European and extra-European languages, and some skill in Arabic. When he was once more in England, he appears to have settled down for a time at Winchester, where he practised medicine with much skill and remarkable success. It was, no doubt, during his residence here that he first fell in with Thomas Cromwell, who noted his talents and his extensive knowledge of foreign countries, which obtained for him the Minister's favour a few years later.

There is no record left of the capacity in which Boorde was employed by Cromwell; but it is not improbable that he was a kind of confidential agent, not to say spy, whose agreeable business it was to watch the actions and to feel

¹ *Boke of Introduction*, chap. vii. That the passage quoted was written at this period and left unaltered, when Boorde compiled the rest of his book, seems comparatively certain. But it is no less probable that he did not complete the little work until shortly before he published it, and that he was constantly adding to it from his further travels.

the pulse of the statesmen of the countries to which he was sent. He was in London in the year 1534, possibly staying at the Charter-House there, from which he writes to Prior Batmanson of Hinton to obtain for him a dispensation from his vows, which he found too rigid for his restless spirit. "Venerable father," he says, "precordially I commend me unto you with thanks. I desire you to pray for me and to pray all your convent to pray for me, for much confidence I have in your prayers; and if I wist Master Prior of London would be good to me, I would see you sooner than you be ware of. I am not able to abide the rugorosity of your religion. If I might be suffered to do what I might without interruption, I can tell you what I had to do; for my heart is ever to your religion, and I love it and all the persons in them, as Jesus knoweth me and keep you."¹ This pathetic little letter shows how irksome to an active man like Boorde were the rules of the Carthusian Order, which are what he means by the word religion. It is possible that he had spent his early noviciate in this Priory of Hinton, and he addresses the Prior in terms of affection and excuse, as if he were addressing a former Superior, or the man who converted him into a Carthusian. Furthermore, it is obvious that he was on the point of making a journey somewhither, which was probably in the service of Cromwell. It is satisfactory to note that the Prior of Hinton did what he was desired to do, and set his reluctant correspondent free.

By this opportune dispensation Boorde was able to make his second, or it may be his third long tour, and on this occasion he was the accredited emissary of Cromwell. He travelled through Normandy, France, Gascony, Bayonne, Castile, Biscay, Spain, part of Portugal, returning through Aragon to Navarre and Bordeaux.² From the last of these places he wrote to his patron to warn him that from his own observation and from conversation with travellers from Rome, Italy, and Germany, he had learned that the "Pope, the Emperor and all other Christian Kings (the French King excepted) be set against our sovereign Lord the King." He further informs Cromwell that in all the countries, through which he had himself passed, large armies and navies were being prepared, and that England had few or no friends. Thus it seems that

¹ E.E.T.S. (E.S.), No. 10, p. 47.

² E.E.T.S. (E.S.), No. 10, p. 53.

the "splendid isolation" of modern foreign policy is earlier than is usually suspected. Like a wise and observant agent, he knew how to keep his eyes and his ears open, as well as how to use his gifts of speech to worm out necessary and valuable information. The date of this letter from Bordeaux is June 20th, 1535, when Boorde was on his return to England, where however he did not arrive for some months. He had yet much to do for his employer in the way of espial; and he had something to do for himself in order to increase his stock of knowledge at the Universities by which he passed. A diligent and eager student, Boorde let slip no opportunity of adding to his learning, and every fact which had a relation however remote to physical science he carefully noted for future use. The information which he acquired on his travels doubtless served his turn by making him perhaps the most skilful English physician of his day.

On July the second, 1535, another letter of his to Cromwell is preserved, in which he to a certain extent qualifies his previous bad news. The feelings of the European potentates had changed towards King Henry, with the very natural exception of the Pope. Boorde himself would care as little as Cromwell himself for the Holy Father's ill-will. He was an Englishman first, though a Catholic by religion, and in the previous year he had willingly taken the Oath of Supremacy, whereby he acknowledged Henry as Head of the Church of England. That the Pope would tamely submit to this deposition from his ancient authority was not to be expected; but it seems as if the Kings of Europe had come to perceive that their English neighbour was fighting their battle for them in flinging off Papal domination. In the meantime Boorde was making the best of his way homewards, after having passed profitable time at the Universities of Orleans, Poitou, Toulouse and Montpellier, when he was delayed by sudden sickness. In the foregoing letter to Cromwell he remarks, "I have sent your Mastership the seeds of rhubarb, the which come out of Barbary. In these parts it is had for a great treasure. The seeds must be sown in March thin; and when they be rooted, they must be taken up and set every one of them a foot or more from another, and watered well, etc."¹ How much is covered by the *etc.* who can say but the cultivators of the succulent plant itself?

¹ E.E.T.S. (E.S.), No. 10, pp. 59-61.

It is interesting to find that a distinguished Secretary of State had time to superintend what appears to have been the first introduction of rhubarb into this country. Many of his contemporaries would deem such a trifling matter ; but it can hardly be denied that this was one of Cromwell's most 'useful' experiments, for which he merits gratitude both from those who use the stems of the acid plant to supply the place of fruit, and from those who employ its drastic root for other purposes than food.

Boorde's sickness did not last long, for before the end of March in the next year he was busily engaged in travelling through Scotland, whither he had been despatched with the double purpose of serving his patron and of adding to his own knowledge. Writing from Leith on the first of April, 1536, he informed Cromwell that he had practised medicine in Scotland and attended a "little University or study named Glasgow."¹ He does not seem to have found the Scots ready to fully appreciate his wide and varied learning, though they were willing enough to come to him for treatment in their ailments,² a circumstance which serves to show his superior medical skill even at that date. He did not greatly enjoy his stay in Scotland, of which land he has left a most unflattering account in his *Boke of Introduction*. Nor need his opinion of the northern people excite any undue surprise ; the spirit of Border-feud was then at its height, and the two kingdoms were bitterly hostile to each other. When, therefore, an Englishman endowed with gifts so great as those of Boorde came into Scotland, it was not to be expected that he would be greeted with an effusive welcome. With only too much truth he would be suspected of being a spy, while his medical skill would certainly bring him patients, but would at the same time provoke the enmity of his fellow-practitioners. From these various causes he stayed no more than a year in Scotland, from which he doubtless returned home with hasty steps and a willing heart.

We find him next at Cambridge, where he was undoubtedly engaged in adding to his knowledge. It is from this University that he writes to Cromwell, craving his assistance to quash a groundless charge of immorality against him. The letter is dated August 13th, 1537, and says amongst other matters, "there be in London certain persons, persons that owe me in money and stuff £53 . . .

¹ *Idem ibidem*.

² *Boke of Introduction*, chap. iv.

and doth slander me behind my back of things that I should do twenty years ago, and truly they cannot prove it, nor I never did it; the matter is, that I should be conversant with women; other matters they lay not to my charge.”¹ That this accusation upon the present occasion was utterly false is certain; it was a tempting charge to bring against so pronounced a defender of celibacy, at a time when men’s hearts were beginning to be drawn away from absolute allegiance to Romanism, and the character of the witnesses is sufficiently questionable to discredit their testimony. When debtors to escape from their just debts are compelled to resort to gossip twenty years old in order to vilify their creditor, their case has few elements of soundness, and the more impartial critic of the present may without hesitation accept Boorde’s vehement denial of their base calumnies.

Upon his home-coming to England from his northern journey, our physician may have practised for some time in his former abode of Winchester, or he may have continued at Cambridge until his love of change sent him forth once more upon his travels. In 1541/2 he had again found a resting-place at Montpellier, a city which appears to have had great attractions for him. Here he remained long enough to graduate as a Doctor in Physic, and to write his three principal books. It is uncertain whether this journey had any political purpose, but it seems probable that his well-known skill in observation would impose upon him a similar task to the one which he had discharged so well upon more than one previous occasion. In the absence of evidence, however, it is unwise to offer anything more than a conjecture, and in historical affairs conjectures require much plausibility to commend themselves to those who take a real interest in attaining the truth. This at least is certain, that after he had taken his foreign degree he made his way back once more to England, where he was admitted to the same degree at Oxford by the influence of the King or of his Minister.² Having thus obtained the object of his desires Boorde settled at Pevensey, where he did not, however, remain long. He removed to Winchester, where he practised for a considerable time and with undoubted success, and finally after various vicissitudes and for some unknown cause he

¹ E.E.T.S. (E.S.), No. 10, p. 61.

² Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol. I. cols. 60 *seqq.*

was lodged in the Fleet Prison in London, until death came upon him in 1549. Of his practice no details are left; all that remains to guide the later critic is the consistent tradition that he was a skilful ladies' physician and that he had many female patients, whose presence near his abode caused the gravest scandal, and possibly were the source of the final trouble which clouded his last days.

It was at Winchester that the malicious reports about him, which Bale was only too willing to believe, were set in circulation. Boorde, who was known to be a Carthusian maintaining many austerities of life, was said to have used his outspoken virginity as a cloak to hide his private sins; nay more, his accusers have gone so far as to assert that he kept a brothel to serve his brother-bachelors. The evidence for this vile charge must be carefully sifted, that it may if possible be refuted, and his memory cleared. But a final decision upon the matters at issue is difficult, if not impossible, from the paucity of the evidence and the bitter prejudices of the witnesses against the hapless physician. John Bale, who cannot be said to be in any degree impartial, roundly asserts that Boorde was put in the Fleet for whoredom and that he poisoned himself for shame after two years' imprisonment (1547-49)¹ in which case it must be admitted that he bore his shame for a considerable time before putting an end to it and himself at the same time. That he died in the Fleet is certain, though the grounds of his accusation are not known otherwise than from this spiteful passage. Nor in any such investigation can the caution of the author of the article on Boorde in the *Biographie Universelle* be fairly forgotten with respect to Bale, "dont le témoignage est toujours suspect, lorsqu'il parle des catholiques." The Bishop of Ossory had sufficient reason from his own point of view to heap discredit on Romanism, and he seldom scrupled to lend a ready ear to scandals which supported his arguments. Hence his testimony is usually to be discounted, or at least to be received with extreme chariness in cases of this kind.

But the evidence of John Ponet or Poynet,² Bishop of

¹ *Scriptorum Illustrum*, etc. (1569), p. 105.

² Ponet. *An apologie fully answeringe by Scriptures and aunceant Doctors a blasphemous book gatherid by D. Stephen Gardiner, of late Lord Chauncelar, D. Smyth of Oxford, Pighius, and other Papists as by ther books appeareth, and of late set furth under the name of Thomas*

Winchester, who was appointed to this see in May, 1551, is of a different character and more difficult to rebut. His accusation, which has no lack of directness, is as follows: "And within this eight years (that is, in or after 1547) was there not a holy man, named Master Doctor Boorde, a physician, that thrice in the week would drink nothing but water, such a Proctor for the Papists then as Martyn the lawyer is now? Who under colour of virginity and of wearing a shirt of hair and hanging his shroud and socking or burial sheet at his bed's feet, and mortifying his body and straightness of life, kept three whores at once at Winchester to serve not only himself but also to help the virgin-priests about in the country, as it was proved. That they might with more ease and less pain keep their blessed virginity. This thing is so true and was so notoriously known that the matter came to an examination of the Justices of the Peace of whom divers be yet living, as Sir John Kingsmill, Sir Henry Seymour, etc. And was before them confessed and his shroud and shirt of hair openly shewed and the harlots openly in the streets and great Church of Winchester punished. These be known stories, which Martyn and the Papists cannot deny."¹

On this violent passage, which is succeeded by still more violent and shameless abuse of the Romanists from one who was himself a recalcitrant Romanist, several remarks must be made to assist the reader in forming a

Martin, Doctor of the Civile Lawes (as of himself he saieth) against the godly marriage of Priests. Wherin dyvers other matters which the Papists defend be so confutid, that in Martin's overthrow they may see their own impudency and confusion. By John Ponet Doctor of Divinity and Busshop of Winchester. Newly correctid and amendid.

The author desireth that the reader will content himself with this first book untill he may have leisure to set furth the next, whiche shal be by God's grace shortly.

Yt is a hard thing for the to spurn against the Prick. Act 9 (1555).

On this violent and extensive title it may be remarked, that the date of the book is six years after the death of Boorde, which somewhat discounts the value of its testimony. It is in all probability a second edition of *A Defence for Mariage of Priestes* (1549), which does not seem to have contained the passage quoted in the text. Furthermore, the furious frenzy of the title-page, and the fact that Poynet had himself violated his vows by marriage, with the questionable use of the text from the book of *Acts*, which is used as a motto for the tract, do not strengthen the reader's faith in the unworthy Bishop's credibility. Besides, the present edition must have been an answer to the attack of Martin upon Poynet's previous book, and the habits of controversy in his time were not so chastened as in our degenerate days, nor even so truthful.

¹ *Vide* the foregoing work, p. 48.

correct estimate of its value as evidence. In the first place, it is manifest that Bale relied upon Poynet for his statement, and that, therefore, they must stand or fall together. Again, as to Poynet himself, it may be profitably noted that he was himself a married priest of a mind little troubled by scruples of any sort. Once more to the charge itself, there is no confirmatory evidence, and the violence of the terms in which it is stated does not strengthen its probability. It is true that witnesses are adduced; but circumstantial tales of this kind, with incidents and witnesses and all the necessary accessories, were freely invented in the sixteenth century both by Protestants and by Catholics in order to besmirch their respective characters. The vile stories told by the earlier Jesuits to blacken the reputation of Queen Elizabeth are a sufficient example of such carefully invented slanders; nor can it be denied that the Protestant leaders were a whit less scrupulous than their opponents in this particular and contemptible method of controversy. Amongst the least reputable of the champions of Protestantism was this very Bishop Poynet, of whom the same stories had been told, and with greater probability, with which he assailed the memory of Andrew Boorde. We will not follow his example, but will refrain from the tempting opportunity to select choice examples of his method of living; suffice it to say, with all due respect to him, that he resembled the "man with the muck-rake," of whom Bunyan has spoken, and his controversial works are full of filth, carefully gathered from many dirty sources.

At this point a question arises, as to whether Boorde was actually in Winchester during the year 1547; and if it could be proved that he was then in that ancient city, why was he sent to London to be punished, when he was actually tried in Winchester? It may of course be argued that he was sent to the chief Charterhouse to be sentenced for his offence; but even granted that this was the case, why was he lodged in the Fleet Prison instead of in the secret cells of the convent? These two questions require an answer before the charge can be admitted, and what is more, no plausible answer can be given to them which would condemn Boorde. But to return to the former question of our physician's whereabouts, when his enemies were busying themselves with his good name; there is no direct evidence save the foregoing passage of

venomous and vituperative vehemence, that he was in Winchester at the time suggested, nor does probability favour that view. In the Colophon to the first book of the *Breviary of Health*, the author asserts that his work was examined at Oxford in June, 1546. It seems certain that he would have been in the University during this unpleasant process. However that may be, the book itself, with its second part, *The Extravagantes*, was printed in London during 1547. Now a book of so technical a character would require all its author's energies and careful supervision to see it safely through the press. How long it would take him to achieve this tedious task, we have no means of knowing; but it is comparatively certain that he would spend the first half of the year 1547 in watching over the work of his printers. Amongst the tenements belonging to the Hospital of St. Giles's, and granted by Henry VIII. to Lord Lisle, was one which in the Royal Licence is said to have been lately *in tenura sive occupatione Doctoris Boorde*. The date of the said licence is July 6th, 1547: a circumstance which shows that Boorde was in London at least until the end of June, 1547. Now there is no evidence save Poynet's to show that he returned to Winchester after he had seen this book through the press. But there is evidence in Bale that he was in the Fleet Prison from 1547 till 1549; if then he were employed in seeing his book published so late as June, 1547, and lodged in the Fleet the same year, there is a very small margin of time allowable for the offence alleged against him by Poynet.

Once more, it was in 1547 that Boorde was issuing a second edition of his *Dietary of Health*, the first edition of which had been issued in 1542. Both editions are dedicated to the Duke of Norfolk, and both are dated from Montpellier on the 5th of May with differing years. At what time during 1547 the second edition was issued is uncertain, but that it was carefully revised by Boorde's own hand cannot be doubted by any one who will take the trouble to compare the two. It is only natural to conclude that he would still be present in London at all events until this second edition had left the printer, and was lodged in the shops of the booksellers. Such a stay would further limit the period at which his dissolute conduct is said to have been indulged in to his own discredit and that of his friends. Again, as has already

been said, this second edition of the *Dietary* retained the previous dedication to the Duke of Norfolk, who, during the year of its issue, was in disgrace in the Tower of London, and who was only saved from execution by the accession of Edward VI. He had been Boorde's patient, and the two men had much mutual esteem; might not the physician's imprisonment be due to this very dedication? Of course this conjecture is as uncertain as the preceding attempted vindication; but it must never be forgotten that once before Boorde had been falsely accused of the same crime, and had been able to refute the hateful charge. Nay, more, it is wise to remember that his second accuser was a bitterly prejudiced prelate, who had been false to those very vows which he asserted Boorde to have broken, while in any case his evidence is not at *first hand*.

William Harrison, a Protestant clergyman, in his turn, has no hesitation in characterising our physician as "a lewd and ungracious priest," and in a later edition of the same work, "a lewd Popish hypocrite and ungracious priest."¹ But he manifestly derived his evidence from Poynt's book as quoted above, and he must stand or fall with his questionable episcopal authority. Harrison is not always to be trusted when he speaks on his own account, and his credulity in other matters would prevent him from being esteemed a wholly trustworthy witness in the present inquiry. An unwarranted attack upon Boorde's temperance made by one Barnes disappears before the unconscious evidence of Poynt. Barnes asserts that Boorde, who some time after 1542/3 had written a scathing denunciation of beards, got drunk in a Dutchman's house, and "vomited over his long beard, which stank so in the morning that he had to shave it off."² That this filthy story could not be true of one who, as Poynt has said, drank water three times a week, and who was so generally temperate as Boorde, seems tolerably certain. Furthermore, the *Boke of Introduction*, as will be seen presently, has a fictitious portrait of our physician without a beard. The portrait may be and is not authentic, but it could hardly have been palmed off as Boorde's had he not been in the habit of shaving his beard. Barnes's whole doggerel tract is

¹ *Description of England*, Edition I., 1577. Edition II., 1586/7.

² *Defence of the Beard*. Introduction.

so full of exaggeration and rubbish that it cannot be accepted as an authority, and the piece of gossip which he quotes bears on its face the mark of a somewhat limited invention. That the charge itself is not true, but was merely put forward to excite a laugh at its object's expense, is thus seen to be all but certain, to say nothing of the fact that the scene is laid in a Dutchman's house, at a time when Boorde was at Montpellier. That the graver charge may melt away in the same easy fashion seems no less probable, and thus the memory of a much maligned worthy will be cleared from the stain with which it has been blackened by unscrupulous enemies.

Whatever may be the truth of this vexed question, Mr. Furnivall's arguments, in his admirable edition of selected words from Boorde for the Early English Text Society, seem perhaps to take too much for granted, though it must be admitted that the previous contentions are chiefly the balancing of probabilities. That the second edition of the *Dietary of Health*, like its predecessor, is dated from Montpellier, has escaped his notice, in its bearing, that is, upon Boorde's whereabouts at the time of its issue. We have seen that Boorde revised the Preface to this, and it seems unlikely that he would have dated his book from Montpellier in 1547, had he not been there during a part of the year. But without pressing so small a point, it may be noted that Boorde was a voluminous author of much whimsicality and no little power. He was, besides, a physician of more than ordinary reputation, as is proved by the fact that he was especially summoned more than once to attend the Duke of Norfolk, with whom he spent some time until he had effected a cure.¹ He possessed, moreover, a remarkable skill in dealing with the diseases of women, a fact which, in itself, was sufficient to provoke the wildest calumnies against him. So great had his medical fame become, that during his last years he became physician to King Henry VIII., on which Hearne² not unjustly remarks: "But the doctor's skill in his profession was a powerful motive to engage the King to have recourse to him, and even to constitute him his physician, well knowing that he was an honest man, and that men of religious principles are more to be relied upon than libertines, however other-

¹ *Dietary*. Preface.

² Wood's *Athenæ*, Vol. I. col. 60.

wise very eminent for their skill in the faculty of physic."¹

In this office Boorde died in 1549, not, as Bale says, by poison, on which Wood, after his manner and with no small truth, remarks: "This is the language of one who had been Bishop in *Ireland*,"² but most probably from that very jail-fever which is so pathetically described in the *Breviary of Health*.³ It was during the last years of "bluff King Hal," that he is said to have gone in and out of the Court frequently, and to have gained the name of *Merry Andrew* by his invariable cheerfulness and his witty sallies. Here again is a tradition, which appears to be well founded, and which does not agree with the date of Poyntet's charge. Boorde was doubtless a skilled man of science within certain limits, but he had not discovered any method of being in Winchester and London at the same time. His interesting nickname, however, would be more likely to arise from his habit in earlier years, as he passed through the towns and villages of his native land. At fairs and on market-days he was wont to harangue the assembled people in a humorous and highfalutin style of speech, which tickled their ears, while it enabled him to give them sound information on matters of health, to which they might not otherwise have listened. He recognised the love of uneducated minds for long words, and proved in his day their recorded effect upon an ancient Scotswoman of blessed memory, who lived long enough after his death, and who derived much spiritual consolation from that "holy and comfortable word *Mesopotamia*." But behind his tall talk there was commonly a modicum of sound sense, and, for his time, of accurate knowledge, while his recommendations of diet and exercise were remarkably acute. Later men, who were not physicians in any recognised sense of the word, used the peripatetic and rhetorical method of their distinguished predecessor, that by throwing wordy dust in the eyes of the credulous, they might sell their harmless but not always inoperative wares. It was these unlicensed practitioners who perpetuated the fame of Boorde under the irreverent designation of *Merry Andrew*, which the crowds bestowed upon their well-meant and usually successful efforts to make an adequate living out of the folly and credulity of mankind.

¹ Introduction to his edition of *Benedictus Abbas*, p. xlvi.

² Wood's *Athenæ* (Bliss), Vol. I. col. 60.

³ *Breviary*, chap. lix.

It is true that this derivation has been rejected by the learned, who have not put forward a more satisfactory one of their own; but that need not prevent the less critical etymologist from clinging to a piece of popular etymology, which has, at least, the support of venerable tradition.

Several of Boorde's numerous works survive, but their scarcity is great, and every day increasing. But few collectors are the privileged possessors of more than one, and their ewe-lamb has usually come into their hands clipped and mangled by unappreciative binders or by literary wolves. The books themselves contain an odd jumble of wit and humour, combined with a real and extensive knowledge, which is wonderfully free, for the most part, from current superstitions. Our author's first production of importance was a small thin quarto volume with a large, and it must be admitted, a somewhat pretentious title, *A Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge, the which doth teach a man to speak a part of all manner of Languages, and to know the usage and fashion of all manner of Countries, and for to know the most part of all manner of Coins of money.* London, 1542. The title of this work shows that, like Bacon a century later, Boorde had taken as his province "all knowledge." It was dedicated to Princess, afterwards Queen Mary, in a letter written in the year of its publication from Montpellier, where its author was at that time studying. The universal knowledge, which it professes to teach, is crowded into thirty-nine short chapters, written partly in verse and partly in prose. At the head of most of these is set a curious woodcut, which professes to represent the figure of individuals of the nations described, or some object for which they were famous. The *seventh chapter*¹ has prefixed what has erroneously been entitled a portrait of Doctor Boorde kneeling under a canopy, wearing a physician's gown, with a laurel-wreath on his brow, and a book before him, to which allusion has already been made in passing. This woodcut is palpably an old block, which has been used up by the printer, into the framework of which he has introduced the words Dr. Boorde. The title page bears the author's Latinised name of *Andreas Perforatus*.

¹ N.B.—All the quotations from this book are drawn from the unique copy in the Chetham Library, in Manchester, which is perfect in all respects save that it has been perforce rebound.

The first chapter naturally and effectively deals with the Englishman, for whose emblem Boorde has borrowed the Venetian satirical picture of the Frenchman—a naked man, with a piece of cloth lying on his right arm, and a pair of scissors in his left hand. Under this type of inconstancy in temper and fashion, which Wood deems to have been a pattern of the physician's "rambling mind and roving brain," the following quaint and caustic verses set forth the national characteristics :—

"I am an Englishman, and naked stand I here,
 Musing in my mind what raiment I shall wear;
 For now I will wear this, and now I will wear that,
 Now I will wear I cannot tell what.
 All new fashions be pleasant to me,
 I will have them, whether I thrive or thee;
 Now I am a frisker, all men doth on me look,
 What should I do but set cock on the hoop?
 What do I care, if all the world me fail?
 I will get a garment, shall reach to my tail;
 Then I am a minion, for I wear the new guise,
 The year after this I trust to be wise,
 Not only in wearing my gorgeous array,
 For I will go learning a whole summer's day;
 I will learn Latin, Hebrew, Greek, and French,
 As I will learn Dutch, sitting on my bench.
 I do fear no man, all men feareth me,
 I overcome my adversaries both by land and by sea;
 I had no peer, if to myself I were true,
 Because I am not so, divers times I rue;
 Yet lack I nothing, I have all things at will,
 If I were wise, I would hold myself still,
 And meddle not with no matters not to me pertaining,
 But ever to be true to my God and to my King;
 But I have such matters rolling in my pate,
 That I will speak and do, I cannot tell what.
 No man shall let me, but I will have my mind,
 And to father, mother, and friend I will be unkind:
 I will follow mine own mind and mine old trade,
 Who shall let me, the devil's nails unparéd?
 Yet all things new, new fashions I love well,
 And to wear them my thrift I will sell.
 In all this world, I shall have but a time,
 Hold the cup, good fellow, here is mine and thine."¹

The rhythm of these lines is faulty, and they have a doggerel simplicity of their own; yet, if they be properly read, their lilt is considerable, and the satire is not without some degree of pungency. King Henry's magnificence had kindled the rage for new fashions of the most extra-

¹ *Boke of Introduction*, chap. i. The line "Who shall let," etc., seems to mean, Who shall hinder me? since my nails like the devil's are unparéd?

vagant kind, and the folly which culminated in the Field of the Cloth of Gold infected the nation like a burning fever. A learned man like Andrew Boorde, whose hair shirt continually reminded him of the plainness of his apparel, might well scorn the gorgeous vanity of the giddy-pated courtiers of his day, who struggled to preserve the precarious favour of the headstrong king by copying his own splendour. Nor was the reproof unseasonable to those who "pined their belly, to clothe their back."

The rest of the *Boke of Introduction* is in no way inferior to the example just given, and it consists of a collection gathered from many sources of curious information, often wittily, and always wisely, set forth. Boorde's knowledge of other languages than his own is marvellous, and his conversations in English and foreign tongues are highly interesting, as being digested into the form which Ollendorf adopted three centuries later, and made it the method of all succeeding *Conversational Grammars*. The second chapter, which treats of Wales, shows an unusually thorough knowledge of that patriarchal, but not over-musical, tongue, which has been spoken by her sons, it is said, since in the form of Adam and Eve they were banished from Eden. Boorde does not flatter the last pure descendants of the ancient Britons, against whom he was one of the first to level a slander not yet dead, that they had an irrepressible tendency to thievery. His verses on the Welsh, their language, musical instruments and primitive habits are marked by satirical dislike. Amongst other more or less dramatic touches he represents the Welshman as saying:—

"My name is ap Rhys, ap Davy, ap Lloyd.
 I love our Lady, for I am of her kin;
 He that doth not love her, I beshrew his chin.
 My kindred is ap Hoby, ap Jenkin, ap Gogh,
 Because I do go bare-legged, I do catch the cough;
 And if I do go bare-legged, it is for no pride;
 I have a grey coat my body for to hide.
 I do love *cawse boby*, good roasted cheese;
 And swish-swash metheglin I take for my fees;
 And if I take my harp, I care for no more;
 It is my treasure, I do keep it in store;
 For my harp is made of a good mare's skin,
 The strings be of horse-hair, it maketh a good din;
 My song, and my voice, and my harp doth agree,
 Much like the hussing of a humble bee."¹

¹ *Boke of Introduction*, chap. ii.

The last line shows that our physician had no appreciation of the subtle harmonies of the Welsh language, nor of the melody of their national musical instrument. But his apposite and appropriate simile shows at least that he had wandered through Wales in his divers journeyings, keeping his eyes open and his ears unclosed to the sweet sounds of that harmonious land.

When Boorde wrote his *Peregrination*, or Itinerary, of Britain, is not known, nor can it be affirmed with any confidence that he actually published it. Thomas Hearne, the eminent antiquary, had a manuscript copy of this curious and interesting little work lent him by a "worthy gentleman Thomas Lambert of Sevenoaks in Kent."¹ It contains a list of market towns, suffragan bishops, hills, dales and downs, castles, fair stone bridges, rivers, and pools, high roads, forests, and the compass of England round about by the towns of the sea coast. The Itinerary shows that Boorde had visited most of the places which he mentions, through some of which he would have passed on his way to Scotland in 1536. Other towns he may have seen on his return journey through Yorkshire² in 1536/7, in which county he had two horses stolen. But space forbids any attempt to follow him on his travels through England or on the Continent, the results of which are amusingly set forth in the *Boke of Introduction*, which contains a wonderful amount of exact information in the shortest possible space. Hints of his experiences are scattered thinly over all of his works, which serve to throw some light upon his life, and it may be confidently asserted that he shows little trace of any tendency to immorality, but if anything a leaning to asceticism in most of his writings.

When Boorde was at Montpellier in 1542/3, he wrote his most important books, the *Dietary*³ and the *Breviary of Health*; but before reviewing these it will be necessary to notice one or two trifles, which are rightly or wrongly attributed to him. Though by no means under ordinary circumstances a superstitious man, he printed somewhere about this time a little tract on astrology, which was

¹ *Benedictus Abbas* (Ed. by Hearne), p. xlii. (Introduction). Boorde's *Peregrination* is printed in the second vol., possibly as having been amongst the MSS of the Cathedral at Peterborough. Hearne edited and published the Abbot's book in 1735.

² *Breviary*, Bk. II. fol. xxiii.

³ *Dietary*, Preface, near the end.

actually the first of his works which was issued from the press, though probably not the first which he had written. Its title is *The Principles of Astronomy, the which diligently perscrutid is in a manner a Prognostication to the world's end*. But if tradition is to be trusted, he did not confine himself to scientific writing, nor to ambitious attempts to give the world a comprehensive manual of universal knowledge, for he intended to publish, and may have done so, a second part to his *Boke of Introduction*, which has not survived. Sometimes he condescended to trifle for the amusement of his friends. Hence that mirthful collection of folly known as *The Merry Tales of the Wise Men of Gotham*, has with no little probability been assigned to him. That most of the tales would suit better with Gotham in Norfolk than with Gotham in Sussex does not in itself invalidate Boorde's authorship of the collection, as Mr. Furnival appears to think. He was well acquainted with Norfolk, where he owned "two tenements in the Sooke in the town of Lynn," which he left to his heir, Richard Matthew,¹ and it does not follow that because he was born in Sussex he must of necessity be describing a town in his native county, the follies of whose inhabitants he set out to ridicule. Nay, the balance of probabilities inclines in the contrary direction, and he would be less likely to satirise a town near his birthplace than a town in a county where he owned houses, but which he did not often visit. He is also credited with a version in excellent verse of the same subject with Chaucer's *Reeve's Tale*, under the title of the *Milner of Abington with his wife and fair daughter, and two poor Scholars of Cambridge*.² Whether this be Boorde's or not,

¹ Vide his will in Hearne's *Benedictus Abbas*, Introduction, p. xli. Wood, *Athenæ* (Bliss), Vol. I. col. 60.

² The authorship of this little poem is much disputed. Hazlitt, in his *Early Popular Poetry*, Vol. II. pp. 98-118, where he reprints the verses, strongly advocates Boorde's authorship thereof, remarking that T. Newton, of Chester, ascribed them to our physician. Newton was also a physician, and a younger contemporary of our author; hence his evidence is of value. The story itself is identical with the very ancient French fable of *De Gombert et des deux Clercs*. But as Boccacio was more commonly read in England at that period, it seems more probable that the plot of the poem was derived from the *Decamerone*, *Giorno IX. Novella vi*. Wynkyn de Worde was the first printer of the *Mylner of Abington*, which he issued in quarto, black letter. Possibly Abington is a mistake for Trumpington, but this is hardly likely. Thus far the substance of Hazlitt. On the other hand F. J. Furnival, in his careful edition of Boorde, to which reference has been so frequently made, who is a master

THE SECOND BOKE
of the Breuiary of Health,
named the Extraua-
gantes, foloweth.

(:)

¶ Compyled by Andrewe Bourde,
Doctour of Physicke: an Eng-
lish man.



1575.

¶ Imprinted at London by
Thomas Cast.

it is difficult to decide ; the external evidence of tradition is in favour of his authorship, while the internal evidence of style appears to discredit such a solution. But be that as it may, the fact remains that he was universally believed for long after his death to have been the author or collector of *Jest-books* of no small reputation, which would certainly have procured him his nickname, were he known to be their compiler.

Leaving these lighter efforts of Boorde's pen in the uncertainty of parentage in which they are involved, a brief account of the *Dietary of Health*, and of its weightier companion, the *Breviary*, must be attempted to give the reader some idea of the contents of two often misrepresented but highly interesting works. The first of these books, both of which were avowedly compiled for the common people, was intended to be a preparative treatise and household companion to the second. Both were written at Montpellier in 1642/3, but the *Dietary* was published first, and in the year in which it was written. It was dedicated to the "Armipotent Prince and valiant Lord Thomas Duke of Norfolk," and it contains many wise directions about such matters as building a healthy house, daily food, exercise, dress, recreations, conduct and the like. Amid much that appears strange to our modern ideas, there still remains a considerable residuum of sound common sense, while even in the curiosities of custom preserved in its amusing pages, the reader learns more about the habits of his forefathers than he will easily gain from many histories. When the ore of contemporary manners and practices has been smelted in the refining pot of time, a large mass of pure metal is left, which is as precious to-day as when it left the mind of its author. To say, as some short-sighted critics do, that the author is unconsciously funny, is to show as little sense and as little appreciation of the true character of Boorde, as are manifested by the writer of the article on our author in the last edition of Chambers' *Encyclopedia*.

in such matters, pronounces that a comparison of the poem in question with any of Boorde's established doggerel pieces, will at once show that he is not, nor could have been, the author. Mr. Furnival labours under the disadvantage of having a preconceived metrical theory, which, perhaps, may somewhat warp his judgment in the present case. But the modern reader, without agreeing even upon so high an authority with a conclusion based solely upon internal evidence, will do well to listen carefully to his opinion.

This ill-informed and inadequate critic has the indecency to style a man, who was far his superior in eminence and learning, "a fantastic old reprobate." Such a piece of criticism is unworthy of the useful book in which it is found, and is a painful evidence of that feeble smartness which besets so much of the article writing of the present. The absence of knowledge is the parent of flippancy, and flippancy is itself the critic's cheapest and most showy furniture.

To return to our subject. In 1546/47, or more probably in the second half of 1547, Boorde published his *Breviary of Health*, of which Fuller says: "Indeed, his book contains plain matter under hard words, and was accounted such a jewel in that age (things whilst they are first are esteemed the best in all kinds), that it was printed *cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum*, Anno 1548."¹ Whether Fuller is referring to the first edition or not is uncertain, for the book ran through many editions with its second part, *The Extravagantes*, up to so late a date as 1575, from which last reprint the succeeding quotations are taken. The author of the article on Boorde in Chalmers's *Biographical Dictionary* therefore requires checking when he stigmatises a book, which was once so popular, as a "very trifling, coarse, and weak performance." Truly these northern critics must have partaken liberally of the national thistle, so sharp and acrid are some of their judgments. A careful perusal of the *Breviary*, of which its censors would seem to have been comparatively innocent, does not justify a single one of these vituperative adjectives. It is not, of course, a Presbyterian sermon, and therefore its language is freer and less stilted than perhaps might have been expected, though its preface is couched in words of extreme length and mighty sound. But the little work is in no known sense of the word trifling, if it be judged by the only correct canon of criticism in such matters, namely, the medical and scientific knowledge of its time. Despite its concise brevity, it sets out with the serious purpose of

¹ *Worthies*, sub "Boorde," London, p. 216. If Fuller's date be correct, it would seem to show that Boorde was in London, and not in prison, at the very time when Poyntet accused him of practising immorality in Winchester. It is probable that Fuller had seen the work, which he quotes, and his evidence, therefore, cannot be said to be without its weight.

enabling the unlearned to minister to their more commonplace ailments ;¹ and the articles upon the several diseases are in the main written with conspicuous simplicity of style. For the date of its issue, it gives wonderfully accurate diagnoses of symptoms, with, in many cases, excellent suggestions by way of remedy. Nor can the *Breviary* be esteemed any more coarse than a modern medical treatise or a modern physiological diagram. Censure of this kind bears much resemblance to a letter which an able teacher of physiology once received from the parents of an irregular scholar: "Mrs. A.—Please don't teach Sarah Jane any more about her inside. It don't do her any good, and besides it's rude !" Furthermore, the book is by no means so weak as its critic ; it contains a clearly compressed compendium of contemporary *Materia Medica*, with the usual and additional remedies drawn from the results of previous knowledge and of its author's own practical experience. Joined to these are a close attention to diet and an exceedingly shrewd common sense.

To make good these assertions, and to clear the memory of an old-world worthy from unfair and unenlightened aspersion, need no other apology ; but, if an introduction to his spicy pages will stimulate others to make researches of their own, a fuller purpose will be served. The Preface to the *Breviary* concludes with mouth-filling words of great magnitude, which are almost wholly confined to that place, and it opens with no less exalted phraseology. But, in that connection, it must be remembered that Boorde was then addressing his fellow-physicians, to whom he felt it necessary to apologise for a work which revealed some portion of their secrets. "Egregious doctors and masters of the eximious and arcane science of physic, of your urbanity exasperate not yourself," and so forth, he begins. But wrapped in these

" Masses of conglomerated phrase,
Enormous, ponderous, and pedantic,"

¹ *Extravagantes*, Preface. " Furthermore learned men and other may well interrupt and reprehend me for writing my incongruity, that the Latin words be not truly set in their cases with the English words, using divers times the Nominative Case for other causes. I do it for no other purpose but that *ignorant persons may the better understand the matter.*"

as Aristophanes would have called them, is much practical common sense, joined to a strain of simple and fervent piety, so manifestly sincere as to further discredit the malevolent Poynt. The number of editions through which the book ran in a short time serves to show that to a large extent it fulfilled its purpose, and that it was valued by the people of the age in which it was written, and by those who lived long after its author had retired from the ills of the world and the bitter spite of remorseless foes.

Boorde was in every sense of the word an honest physician; when he could not cure a patient he never attempted to blink the fact, as some have been known to do, but commended to him the contemplation of Christ's passion, which would make him patient in fact as well as in name. Furthermore, the worthy doctor was extremely cautious not to suggest remedies in the use of which there was any possible risk. At the same time he took great care to preserve medical mysteries and to discourage the ignorant from setting up as amateur mediciners on their own account. As he says: "The arcane science of physic should not be manifest and open, for then the eximious science should fall into great detriment, and doctors the which hath studied the faculty should not be regarded so well as they are. Secundarily, if I should write all my mind, every bungler would practise physic upon my book, wherefore I do omit and leave out many things, relinquishing that I have omitted to doctors of high judgment, of whom I shall be shent (blamed) for part of these things I have written in this book: howbeit I do set God before mine eyes and charity, considering that I do write this book for a common wealth, as God knoweth my pretence, not only in making this book, but all other books that I have made, that I never did look for no reward, neither of Lord, nor of printer, nor of no man living, nor I had never no reward, nor will I never have none so long as I do live, God helping me, whose perpetual and fatherly blessing be upon us all."¹ These are the words neither of a hypocrite nor of a fool, and they certainly deserve to experience a juster appreciation than has ever been meted out to their author.

Boorde's object in writing his book was the single-hearted endeavour to benefit his race, and at the same

¹ *Breviary* (1575), Preface, fol. 5 and 6.

time not take the bread from the mouths of his often hungry fellow-practitioners. His knowledge of his subject was well known to his contemporaries, who would eagerly take advantage of its useful results. But he was not minded to tell all that he knew: his strictures on *bunglers* recall the melancholy confidence of many would-be home-healers, who draw their scanty stock of dangerous knowledge from the *Family Doctor*, and from the more innocent treatises of homœopathy. Fortunately for the health, if not of the life, of the nation, the symptoms detailed in the former have a sufficient mantle of mystery to excite caution in the unprofessional mediciner, while the remedies of the latter are comparatively innocuous. Like many a less noted physician, Boorde realized the danger of putting lancets into the hands of medical babes and sucklings, and out of charity to them he refrained from revealing the more esoteric branches of his knowledge. That he was wise in his cautious attitude towards those whom he wished to benefit cannot be doubted. It was as true then as now that

“Fools rush in where angels fear to tread,”

and that ignorance is the mother of rash confidence. Boorde had no mind to assist the foolish in their perilous course, nor did he desire to clear the ground of those unexplained difficulties in the art of healing, which form so wholesome a deterrent to the less instructed majority of the human race. So much knowledge as they could understand would he give them, and only so much. The long course of medical training through which he had passed had taught him how subtle are the attacks of dangerous diseases, and these he left to the proper care of men duly qualified to deal with their adequate treatment.

Another proof of his prudent sanity is seen in his recommendations to patients “sick unto death”; he will attempt to cure them, but he will never disguise the risk of failure. He says: “And then if the patient will have any counsel in physic; first, let him call to him his spiritual physician, which is his ghostly father, and let him make his conscience clean, and that he be in perfect love and charity, and if he have done any wrong let him make restitution if he can, and if he be in debt let him look to it, and make a formal will or

testament, setting everything in due order for the wealth of his soul ; wise men be sure of making their testaments many years before they die, and doth renew it once a year as they increase or decrease in goods or substance. All these aforesaid things godly and ghostly provided for the soul ; then let the patient provide for his body, and take counsel of some expert physician, how and in what wise the body may be recovered of its infirmity, and then to commit his body to the industry of his physician, and at all times ready to follow the will, mind, and counsel of his physician, for whosoever will do the contrary, Saint Augustine saith : *Seipsum interimit qui præcepta medici observare non vult* ; that is to say, He doth kill himself that doth not observe the commandment of his physician. After all this, mark this matter well, that if there be any physician or chirurgeon, which is with any sick man, woman, or child, let no man disquiet them that be in the house, nor tell them what they should do, let every person be tendable about them, and do as they shall command them. And let every man in the house please and serve the physician or chirurgeon honestly, and let them lack nothing to the end that they may be the more diligent to do the thing that they go about, which is to recover the sick person ; for and if the physician or chirurgeon be checked, and not gently intreated, and have no more than they do command, it will discourage them so much, that they will have no joy nor pleasure to do their cure.”¹

This long extract is full of sound prudence and wise advice ; Boorde had assuredly seen the evils of neglecting to make a will during his confidential visits in his medical capacity ; though he does not seem to have obeyed his own warning. His will, as far as we can learn, is dated in the year, if not the month, of his death ; though he may have made an earlier testament and renewed it from year to year. But it is always easier to give than to take advice, and of all the men in the world the lawyer and physician, who are compelled to give much good counsel professionally, are the least likely to follow their own or the advice of others. Perhaps they are apt to discount the value of advice, which costs them nothing. Boorde, like most doctors, had also seen and suffered from the officious ignorance of patients or nurses, who, though they had summoned the physician to minister to their need,

¹ *Breviary*, Preface, fol. 4 and 5.

were assertively confident that they were wiser than he. The amount of suggestions, more or less foolish, which all doctors derive from the confidence of their patients, would fill a large volume, and would probably add much to the mirth of the healthy. Nay, it must be remembered that during the first half of the sixteenth century, and for long afterwards, nurses were either not in existence professionally, or not trained as they are to-day. The Mrs. Gamps of a former generation would naturally have the faults of their immortal successor with an added intensity, while their knowledge would be more limited even than hers. Furthermore, their professional skill would in most cases be correctly represented by the vagaries of the non-existent but no less unforgotten Mrs. Harris. To both of these objectionable classes of people Boorde gave good counsel, though the folly of negligence and the impertinence of common-place wiseacres are generally beyond the help of the most skilful practitioner on earth.

Having thus first laid down the general rules of procedure in cases of sickness, Merry Andrew goes on to describe the various forms of disease in three hundred and eighty-two chapters in his first book, with a suggested remedy or remedies for each. The second book contains ailments not set forth in the first, or in some cases more fully treated, and bears the name of *The Extravagantes*, possibly from the greater rarity of many of the complaints enumerated. Each of these chapters of the book contains the Latin, the Greek, the Barbarous, and sometimes even the Arabic name of the various foes to health, which are arranged alphabetically according to their Latin designations. Subjoined to each is its English name, with the usual symptoms, the cause, and, as the worthy doctor hath it, *a remedy*. Under the heading of *Anima*, for example, is a brief description of the human soul, which is not set in the *pineal gland*, and to comfort the sadness of which on earth "the electuary *de gemmis* and the confection called *Alchermes*,"¹ whatever those may be, are said to be useful. The most miscellaneous matters are handled with more or less skill and some humour. Under the heading of *Capillus* is an elaborate article on "the hair of a man." Discoursing agreeably on the difference in hair, Boorde informs his readers that "there be seven principal colours of the hairs. There is

¹ *Breviary*, chap. xxii.

first the auburn hair, yellow hair, red hair, black hair, flaxen hair, grey hair, and white hair. Auburn hair and yellow hair cometh of a gentle nature, grounded upon a good complexion which is blood; flaxen hair is engendered of phlegm; the red hair is engendered of the multitude of gross humours, specially of gross blood. The black hair cometh of choleric humours mixed with melancholy humours. The grey hairs do come of the defection of natural heat, or else it doth come of corrupt phlegm. Every hair hath a hole, and beside every hair is a pore where the sweat doth come forth. The hairs of a man have divers impediments; it may be eaten with worms, it may fall off, it may stink." For the second *impediment*, what seems to be a sound remedy is suggested: "Take of the oil named in Latin *oleum costinum*, and anoint the head with it oft."¹ The said oil being the aromatic essence of an Arabian plant, may really be of use as suggested, and its virtues are at least as genuine as those ascribed to more modern *hair restorers*, both by those who sell them and by those who are sold.

A touching significance attaches to the article, which "doth shew of the sickness of the prison," if we may believe, as well we may, with Mr. Furnival, that this was the cause of Boorde's death in 1549. "*Carcinoma* is the Greek word," he says; "in English it is named the sickness of the prison. And some authors doth say it is a canker, the which doth corrode and eat the superial parts of the body; but I do take it for the sickness of the prison. *The cause of this infirmity*. This infirmity doth come of corruption of the air and breath and filth the which doth come from men, as many men to be together in a little room, having but little open air. *A remedy*. The chief remedy is for man so to live, and so to do, that he deserve not to be brought into no prison. And if he be in prison, either to get friends to help him out, or else to use some perfumes and to keep the prison clean."² Both in the disease, in his account of its causes, and in his suggested remedies, Boorde shows his acute perception and his ready wit. Whether he had already experienced the horrors of imprisonment in those uncleanly days, when he penned this passage, or whether he was merely relating his sufferings during his confinement in the Charterhouse, cannot now be decided. But his words have a touch of

¹ *Breviary*, chap. lvi.

² *Idem*, chap. lix.

pathos, which seems to have been the child of pain, and they may have been added during his last year spent in the Fleet. In any case the fact remains that he could not act up to his own wisdom, and the proverb, "Physician, heal thyself," applies with exact fitness to Merry Andrew, who, from some cause not yet definitely ascertained, died in prison. His wit and learning could not save him from that fate; he committed some crime, real or imaginary, and he could not take his own remedy.

Like all the men of science of his day, Boorde believed that most of human ailments were caused by the indisposition of one of the four humours—phlegm, blood, choler, and melancholy. The cause of these humours he thus briefly describes: "God made them in man, and He did make man perfect of four humours, in true portion, but after that, through sensuality, man did alter his humours or complexion, setting them out of order and frame."¹ It is grossly unfair to follow the spite of some ill-natured critics, who set down the universal belief of his age to Andrew Boorde's individual foolishness. Such censorious biographers might as well blame a negro because he is black. But any stick, if it be sufficiently strong, is good enough to use in beating a dog, and some of our author's enemies, both ancient and modern, have given him little but a dog's wages and a fool's abuse. He was not before his time in this respect, though in some others he was so; he knew and accepted the principles of science and physiology generally received in his day, and he applied remedies in accordance with the belief of his age. Let those who are before their own age abuse him because he shared in the mistakes of his time, and there will be found but few to perform the invigorating but invidious task. Where he did differ from the majority of his contemporary physicians was, that in spite of erroneous theories and defective scientific knowledge he did succeed in performing some cures, at least, which would have done no discredit to a skilled modern practitioner.

No common disease of importance is omitted from Boorde's comprehensive summary; with plain homely English he speaks of corpulence, disguising nothing, and using words which might with advantage be still employed in our hypercritical period. "*Corpulentia* is the Latin word. In Greek it is named *Pachos*. In English it

¹ *Breviary*, chap. clxxxiv.

is named corpulence, corporateness, or grossness of the body, or fatness. *The cause of this impediment.* This impediment doth either come by nature or else by gross feeding, or else by great drinking, and that doth make a great belly. *A remedy.* If it do come by nature, there is no remedy; if it come by gross feeding, or great drinking, use much pepper both in meats and drinks, and use purgations and laxative meats, and use labour and exercise the body in the open air and temperate weathers.”¹ The soundness of these remedies, some of which can only be described as not a little drastic, will be acknowledged by the unhappy victims of this distressing ailment. Boorde was before his age in the extreme stress which he laid upon abstinence as a cure for many common forms of sickness, and in the first chapter of the *Breviary* he urges this difficult remedy with convincing force. Nor did he neglect the important matters of diet and exercise, thus working cures which were beyond the ordinary scope of the limited scientific knowledge of the sixteenth century. Like a prudent and practised physician, he understood how much suffering is caused by neglect of these first principles of health, and he never failed to recommend with great strength fuller care and more constant regularity in both, in those cases in which his patients themselves had been guilty of any needless carelessness. Had more of his contemporary practitioners been as far-sighted as he was, there can be little doubt that their patients would have benefited more than by the use of fanciful drugs, which might or might not effect the object of their intention.

That he believed in evil spirits and their power over the human body and mind, cannot be denied. But in this superstition he did not stand alone; many of the greatest physicians and divines were no less credulous, and there are recorded attempts to exorcise the evil one and his imps, which are as curious as they are superstitious. But he never suffered his belief to hinder his medical skill; when he was called in to visit such a patient, he employed the remedies which the case itself suggested, and upon occasion with uncommon success. Indigestion he realized was a fruitful source of a disordered imagination, and that was a curable ailment. In his chapter on *Nightmare* he mentions an instance of a woman said to be so possessed,

¹ *Breviary*, chap. xc.

which had forced itself upon his notice during his extensive practice. But even so he is not content to set down the disease itself to the influence of an evil spirit alone ; on the contrary, he suggests several possible causes. "This impediment," he asserts, "doth come of a vaporous humour or fumosity rising out of and from the stomach to the brain ; it may come also through surfeit and drunkenness, and lying in the bed upright ; it may come also of a rheumatic humour suppressing the brain, and the humour descending doth perturbate the heart, bringing a man sleeping into a dream to think that which is nothing is somewhat, and to see that thing that he seeth not, with such like natures." For all such causes of the disease he has several suggested cures, which as far as they go are admirable. "First, let such persons beware of lying upright, lest they be suffocated, or die suddenly, or else at length they will fall into a madness, named *mania* ; therefore let such persons keep a good diet in eating and drinking, let them keep honest company, where there is honest mirth, and let them beware of musing or studying upon any matter, the which will trouble the brain, and use divers times sternutations and gargarices (gargles?), and beware of wines and everything the which doth engender fumosity."¹ Having thus given his remedies for natural form of the sickness, with more hesitation and a frank confession of his own ignorance of its effects, our physician recommends St. John's-wort as a cure for nightmare caused by an evil spirit ; whereby he shows himself both learned in folk-lore and skilled in adapting himself to the beliefs of his time.²

¹ *Breviary*, chap. cxix.

² Cf. *Extravagantes*, chap. xi. fol. 5-7, where he attributes the prevalent vice to possession by evil spirits. Amongst other matters which he details therein at some length the following has its own interest for the reader, who recognises that its truth is as great to-day as when the words were written. He says: "In all the world there is no region nor country that doth use more swearing than is used in England : for a child that scarce can speak, a boy, a girl, a wench, nowadays will swear as great oaths as an old knave and an old drab. It was used that when swearing did come up first, that he that did swear should have a fillip ; give that knave or drab a fillip with a club, that they do stagger at it, and then they and the children would beware after that of swearing ; which is a damnable sin. The vengeance of God doth oft hang over them, and if they do not amend and take repentance they shall be damned to hell, where they shall be mad for evermore, world without end. Wherefore I do counsel all such evil disposed persons of what degree soever they be of, amend these faults whiles they have now leisure, time and

Generally Boorde's derivations of the names of diseases are wonderfully accurate for that unphilological period; but sometimes he is led into error by similarities of sound, or by the still more seductive charms of popular etymology. For instance, he derives *Ephemer Fever*¹ from a "beast, some say it is a fish, and some say it is a worm, the which doth die that day in which he beginneth to live." Truly this is a *fishy* derivation, unless indeed the grave physician is unconsciously anticipating the modern discovery of *bacilli*. But his explanation of *Febris sinochus*, as he prefers to spell the last word, is very droll, though by no means convincing. "*Sinochus*," he asserts, "is derived out of the two words, *sin*, that is to say, *without*, and *choos*, *travel*; and that is as much as to say as fever *without rest*." ² When *with* becomes *without*, and *travel* is turned into *rest* in the mental processes of ety-

space, and do penance, for else there is no remedy but eternal punishment." Boorde does, however, suggest "a remedy," which under a monarch like Henry VIII. might have been efficient, though there can be little doubt, that the law-maker would have been one of the first to break his own law. He pleads with the passion of a pure-mouthed if not of a pure-minded man: "Would to God that the King our sovereign Lord with his most honourable Council would see a reformation for this swearing and for heresies, for the which sins we have had great punishment, as by dear price of corn and other victuals: for no man can remedy these times, but God and our King, for there be a perilous number of them in England, if they were diligently sought out. I do speak of heretics; as for swearers a man need not seek for them. For in the King's Court and Lords' Courts, in cities, boroughs, and in towns, and in every house, in manner there is abominable swearing, and no man doth go about to redress it, but doth take swearing as for no sin, which is a damnable sin, and they which doth use it, be possessed of the devil; and no man can help them, but God and our King."

The whole of this chapter, which begins on fol. 5, is of supreme interest, as it shows a side of Boorde's character not often appreciated. It is difficult to believe that a man, who could speak with such impressive solemnity upon one of the commonest of the vices of his age, should have been guilty of the greater sin of lechery. In this very chapter he narrates at full length the attempt by some priests to cast out a devil from a woman. "This woman of Germany," he says, "which is ccc miles from Rome, was brought to the pillar (in St. Peter's), I then there being present, with great strength and violently with xx or more men. This woman was put into that pillar within the iron grate, and after did go in a priest and did examine the woman in this manner, in the Italian tongue. Thou devil or devils, I do adjure thee by the potential power of the Father and the Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the virture of the Holy Ghost, that thou do shew to me, for what cause that thou dost possess this woman." The woman's answer Boorde does not give, nor did he stay to see the end of the experiment, being afraid lest the devils should enter into him!

¹ *Breviary* chap. cxxxvi.

² *Idem*, chap. cxl.

A remedy.

First qualifie the heate of the bloud with colde herbs sodden in posset ale, or vse a Patisane, and vse the confection of Anacardine, and troces of Camphire, and a decoction of Mardeu heaire is good, and vse a good dyet, & take restorative meates & drinkis, or els take the confection made of the stones of a flor, Lorlaunum, troces of Camphire or the oyle of swete Almas.

The . 150. chapter doth shew of the
Feuer pestilence.

Febri pestilencialis, be the latin wordes. In greke it is named Epidimeia. In English it is named the feuer pestilence. *The pestilence feuer*
& this feuer is the most venemous of all other feuers, & doeth most infect. The cause of this Feuer.

This feuer doeth come many wayes, either by infection of the ayer, or one man infected doeth infect an other, as it doeth appere more larglier in the chapitre named Epidimia.

A remedy.

For a remedy loke in the the chapitre named Epidimeia, and in the Dyetary of health.

The . 151. chapter doth shew of an euill feuer the
which doth comber yonge persons, named the Feuer lurden.

Among all the feuers I had almost forgotten the feuer lurden, with the which many yonge men, yonge women, maydens and other yonge persons be soze infected now a dayes. *The feuer lurden.*

The cause of this infirmitie.

This feuer doeth come naturally, or else by euill & slouthfull bynging vp. If it doe come by nature, then this feuer is incurable, for it can neuer out of the flesh y is bred in the bone, if it come by slouthfull bynging vp, it may be holpen by diligent labour.

A remedy.

There is nothing so good for the feuer lurden as is Vnguentū baculinum, that is to saye. Take a stroke or wan of a yeard of length and more, and let it be as great as a mans synger, and
with

mology, we get a perfect illustration of *lucus a non lucendo*. It will be needless to cite examples of correct derivations, which any reader can find for himself on the pages of the venerable quarto; suffice it to say that Boorde is not often caught tripping, and that when he is in error, he is not wont to go so far astray as in the foregoing. In the old copy of the *Breviary*, from which these quotations have been taken, is a note in contemporary handwriting of much beauty in the margin of the chapter, which is devoted to the *Erratic Fever*.¹ Some old physician, now long since passed beyond the fret of "life's fitful fever," has added a remedy to those given by Boorde. "Take," he says, and the reader feels that he would rather not take any such thing—"take borage, endive, succory, and violet leaves, of each alike, and make a broth with raisins and a chicken (chikon he phonetically spells the unoffending bird). Beware of strong drinks." Who the writer was must remain unknown; but his decoction was sufficiently disagreeable to cast out the devil himself, much more to terrify any weaker fever. Peace be with him, and may he rest in regions far other than those in which even such chicken broth would be tolerable.

In addition to the twenty fevers, which are described in detail, is an inimitable piece of innocent waggishness in a chapter, which "doth shew of an evil fever which doth encumber young persons, named the *fever lurden*," or in more modern English, the fever of laziness. On this common and dangerous, though not mortal disease, Boorde's remarks are both wise and facetious. "Among all the fevers I had almost forgotten the *fever lurden*," he remarks, smiling in his sleeve, "with which many young men, young women, maidens, and other young persons be sore infected nowadays. *The cause of this infirmity*. This fever doth come naturally, or else by evil and slothful bringing up. If it do come by nature, then this fever is incurable, for it can never come out of the flesh that is bred in the bone; if it come by slothful bringing up, it may be holpen by diligent labour. *A remedy*. There is nothing so good for the fever as *unguentum baculinum*, that is to say, take a stick or wand of a yard of length or more, and let it be as great as a man's finger, and with it anoint the back and shoulders well morning and evening; and do this twenty-one days, and if this fever will not be holpen in that

¹ *Breviary*, chap. cxlviii.

time, let them beware of wagging in the gallows. And whilst they do take their medicine put no Lubberwort into their pottage, and bear (forbear) of knavering about their heart; and if this will not help, send them to Newgate, for if you will not, they will bring themselves thither at length.”¹ Jocose as this little chapter intentionally is, it contains a world of sense, though the modern victim of the sweet amenities of youth is unfortunately prevented from using the profitable application of Doctor Boorde’s ointment.

The book under examination is not so much a guide to the cure of sickness, though that function plays no mean part in its pungent pages, as an instructor in the art of avoiding sickness altogether. So among the diseases we find *Care* described at considerable length, as a dangerous foe to health, while the excellent effect of mirth in preserving bodily health is set forth in the following beautifully written and manifestly sincere passage: “Mirth cometh many ways; the principal mirth is when a man doth live out of deadly sin and not in grudge of conscience in this world; and that every man doth rejoyce in God, and in charity with his neighbour; there be many other mirths and consolations, some being good and laudable, and some vituperable. Laudable mirth is one man or one neighbour to be merry with another with honesty and virtue, without swearing or slandering, and ribaldry speaking. Mirth is in musical instruments, and ghostly and godly singing, mirth is when a man liveth out of debt, and may have meat and drink and clothing, although he have never a penny in his purse; but nowadays he is merry that hath gold and silver and riches in lechery, and all is not worth a blue point.”² It is incredible that a man living in intermittent adultery and in habitual hypocrisy could have written words so full of feeling, and so full of pathos too. The ring of sincerity sounds in every line, and this in itself must serve to make the critic cautious in accepting any tales of his immoral life. It seems certain that the shadow of debt, in spite of his tenements and his little estate, was darkening over the

¹ *Breviary*, chap. cli.

² *Idem*, chap. clxiii. N.B.—A *blue point* is one of those tags used for fastening the doublet to the hose. It may further be noted that Boorde was not imprisoned when he was first accused of adultery; hence it seems improbable that this was the ground of his later imprisonment.

closing years of Boorde's life, as well it might, seeing that his books were unproductive labour. Scarcely three years after he had published his beautiful words on mirth, he paid his creditors in full by paying the universal debt of nature. That his mirth gradually faded from him towards the end of his life, which was not more than threescore years at most, can hardly be doubted from the repeated allusions to debt in this treatise, and he wrote what he felt with all the strength of an acute and original mind.

An old bachelor himself, Boorde had not too high an opinion of women in general, while he had a morbid horror of that woman who with malice aforethought ruled her husband. Hence his description of the "kind sweetener of man's cup of existence" is neither gallant nor flattering: "First, when a woman was made by God, she was named *virago*," he says, and it must be confessed that some such viragoes still exist in the purlieus of humanity, "because she did come of a man, as it doth appear in the second chapter of Genesis. Furthermore, why a woman is named woman, I will show my mind. *Homo* is the Latin word, and in English it is as well for a woman as for a man; for a *woman* the syllables converted is no more to say as a *man* in *woe*, and set *woe* before *man*, and then it is *woman*, for as much as she doth bear children with woe and pain and also she is subject to man, except it be there where the white mare is the better horse, therefore *ut homo non cantet cum cuculo*, let every man please his wife in all matters, and displease her not, but let her have her own will, that she will have whosoever say nay. *The cause of this matter.* This matter doth spring of an evil education or bringing up, and of a sensual or perverse mind, not fearing God nor worldly shame. *A remedy.* Physic cannot help this matter, but only God's great sickness may subdue this matter."¹ Herein Boorde speaks with some wisdom of a cynical caste, but with more prejudice. A Carthusian at heart, in spite of his various dispensations he appears to have had little chivalry, and like so many otherwise celibates to have forgotten that his mother was a woman. His remedy is at least likely to be effectual, and recalls the unkind sarcasm of Doctor Pangloss: "Physicians, my

¹ *Breviary*, chap. ccxiii.

Lord, put their patients to sleep in another manner. To die, to sleep no more. Shakespeare, ahem !”

The remedy first suggested by our author to those unhappy beings who are tormented by ceaseless itching is that primitive process of excoriation which must surely have preceded the wearing of clothes. “This I do advertise every man,” he naïvely says, “for this matter to ordain or prepare a good pair of nails, to scratch and claw, and to rend and tear the skin and flesh.”¹ There is a beautiful simplicity about this method of medical treatment, which cannot fail to strike the most careless observer of these later ages of brimstone and treacle. But there is, in addition, a sound philosophy involved, which does much credit to the worthy doctor’s good sense. Boorde was wise in his generation, and wiser than many of his generation ; where heroic remedies were not needed, he did not hesitate to recommend natural methods of treatment, to the great and lasting benefit of his patients, if not of his pocket. Throughout the whole of his book, which was the first of its kind in England, there are signs of a very full medical knowledge for the date of its publication, and what is more, the author shows himself to have been a man who knew how to apply the results of a large practice to the ailments of those whom he had not actually seen. His remedies are for the most part so simple as to be within the reach of most of his readers ; and though he does not always advise such primitive treatment as scratching for itching, he seldom outruns the knowledge and possibilities of those for whom he was writing. The simplicity of the English of the bulk of the *Breviary*, as compared with the majestic diction of its preface, shows that he could adopt a simple method of expression when he chose, and that he did not overstate the aim of his work as the benefit of the common folk without any hope of profit to himself.

One passage may with advantage be quoted from the *Extravagantes*, both to evidence the continued simplicity of his style and his frequent prescription of a wise temperance. Some of his patients had suffered from a *Surfeit*, the causes of which he details with perfect accuracy. “This impediment doth come most commonly,” he alleges, “of evil rule or evil diet, or eating or drinking too much meat or drink, or eating raw or evil meats and drinks.”

¹ *Breviary*, chap. ccxcii.

Nor is the remedy which he suggests less apposite. "The best remedy," he continues, "for a surfeit is to abstain long after that the surfeit is taken, and to sleep much, or else to labour it out, and for this matter purgations be good, so be it that age and time will permit it. And after a surfeit a draught of *Aqua vitæ* may be permitted."¹ Those who have suffered from a surfeit, and who have tried Boorde's remedies, will admit their general efficiency. Many a thoughtless workman has had to work off the effects of a "lodge-dinner," when the "Odd-fellows" have been acting up to their name, or the "Free Masons" occupied themselves in laying a foundation for medical treatment. Less laborious sufferers have peevishly called for soda-water to relieve their parched palates, while they were endeavouring to sleep off the results of their own undue indulgence. Whether Boorde had ever suffered himself from such a sickness is uncertain, though the libels of tradition have freely asserted that he did; but at any rate he handles the over-filled patient with sufficient care and wise discretion. That one or other of his remedies would be freely taken by his readers can hardly be doubted, at a time when the king himself set the example of luxurious debauchery to his Court, and that in its turn to the nation. The draught of *Aqua vitæ* would doubtless be a welcome medicine to those who could get it, and more than one patient would find even a surfeit not disagreeable, if he might only wash away its effects in so spirited a cup.

We are sometimes apt to think that *corns* are purely a modern privilege, and a sign of superior civilization. But that they were not so is evident from the following passage, which is quoted as much for the sake of its suggested remedy as for any loftier purpose. "*Cianus* is the Latin word, and some do name it *Papule*. In English it is named *corns* or *agnels* in a man's feet or toes. *The cause of these impediments*. This impediment doth come by wearing of straight shoes, by reason of the which the feet and toes doth not lie at liberty with ease, and then labour with heat obviating or being concurrent together doth procreate or engender this aforesaid impediment. *A remedy*. First pare the agnels or corns with a sharp knife, unto the time it doth come to the quick flesh that the blood runneth out; wipe away the blood

¹ *Extravagantes*, chap. vi.

and then drop in the place or places red wax, and let it lie unto the time it be consumed, and then if need be reiterate this matter.”¹ Whether the cure would be efficacious or not, can only be known to those who have tried. But it may be remarked, in passing, that corns afford an admirable illustration of one of the hospitable proverbs of our ancestors, “cut and come again.” We may cut out the offending morsel, but it is almost certain to show its hard head and to make its pointed tail felt once more. But for all that the remedy is interesting and worth a trial by those martyrs of an ugly and indiscreet fashion, which insists upon shoes that are neither artistic nor sensible. It is instructive, too, to note how early in our history our countrymen began to take an unhallowed pride in their feet, with the painful result of making them almost deformed, and the no less painful punishment of corns.

It will not be necessary to cull any more passages from the *Extravagantes*; the second book of the *Breviary of Health* is like the first, only more so, if an Americanism may be pardoned. It deals with many interesting forms of disease, such as are practically unknown to-day, and the remedies suggested in each case afford a curious knowledge of the drugs which were used at an earlier date. It is not for a moment hinted that Boorde was a scientific discoverer of unknown laws of healing, nor that his physiology was perfect; nor was his method of treatment invariably successful any more than his remedies were infallible. Still, for the time in which he lived, he was an unusually skilful physician, who for the most part knew what he was doing, and who had a strikingly correct perception of the idiosyncrasies of the general body of patients. His book was undoubtedly popular, though that in itself is not a criterion of excellence in the case of medical books. Mankind has a morbid curiosity into its inner workings, and a strange propensity to imaginary ailments; hence any book which professes to throw light upon the human machine commonly excites an unhealthy zeal for pseudo-scientific inquiry into the minds of the many. But though Boorde's *Breviary* was popular in aim and in style, he made every effort to set down accurately some part of his extensive knowledge in order to help the sufferers from the more common foes to health. That he

¹ *Extravagantes*, chap. vii.

succeeded in his object can hardly be doubted, though it is true that there were no coroners' inquests in his day to investigate the number of those who poisoned themselves by misapplying his medicines. He benefited the persons for whom he wrote, and whom it was his object to benefit, and he deserves all honour for his real service. Many who have set out with loftier ambitions have achieved less, and those frivolous critics who, without reading his works, have pronounced them foolish, have only made an exhibition of themselves and their own incapacity of rightly estimating a conspicuous and useful servant of his country and his race.

The *Breviary of Health* contains a mine of folk-lore: old proverbs, old-fashioned remedies which still survive along the countryside, ancient and amusing methods of casting out evil spirits, forgotten elements of diet, obsolete customs, and a host of similar curiosities meet the reader throughout its pages. To the herbalist the time-worn book is useful from the profound knowledge of simples which its author uniformly displays; though it must be confessed that here and there a *remedy* suggests that its takers may be *simples*, as well as the medicines which they take. To the student of the history and social life of a long-past century, the frank candour of Boorde gives many valuable hints and much positive information concerning the inner habits of the nation. It is from works of this kind that the student of sociology, who is not blinded by his own ideal theories, may learn much that will help him to form a less incorrect estimate of human nature than he is wont to do. Customs have changed, and enlightenment has increased with corresponding comforts and educational advantages; but the heart of the nation remains the same, and deep down in its recesses lurk the phantoms of bygone superstitions, unrecognised perhaps by their possessors, but in their breast for all that. Into these Boorde and his books give a clear insight, which is none the less valuable because it is commonly neglected. But in spite of such traces of superstition and the quaint credulousness of an earlier age, he had acquired much skill in diagnosis, and he has but seldom suggested an absolutely foolish remedy. Naturally enough, he believed in such semi-miraculous ceremonies as touching for the King's Evil, just as he believed in the possession of human bodies by the devil and his angels. But such a

belief is no proof either of his ignorance or of his folly, as some of his modern censors would have us admit. These were the commonplace beliefs of his time, in which Protestants and Catholics had an equal share; and to blame a sixteenth-century worthy for not being so wise as a contemporary giant of science, is as wise as to blame the ancient Britons for the scantiness of their raiment. Boorde, like all his contemporaries, had his budget of superstitions; but he was nevertheless a learned and skilful physician, and withal, if his written words are to be trusted, a deeply pious man.

As we turn over the black-letter pages of the *Breviary of Health*, we meet with the record of many diseases which have vanished from a more cleanly generation, and perhaps there is no more striking sign of progress than the improvement in the condition of prisons and prisoners of the present time. But in the majority of his remedies for these Andrew Boorde was before his day; abstinence, temperance, and cleanliness are words ever on his tongue, nor does he refrain from laying the lash of ridicule upon the shoulders of contemporary folly. He did, it is true, use various electuaries, of the contents whereof he did not inform his readers; he had marvellous faith in the pain-subduing power of the Pills of Cochee, whatever they may have been. But a more modern century has worshipped its *Solar Elixir* and its *Pink Pills for Pale People*. Hence it is out of place, and a sure mark of critical insanity, to lend a too ready ear to ill-natured slanders about a man of worth, and to mock a physician of no mean skill, because his knowledge was not more than three hundred years in advance of his time. Yet of both these pieces of unfairness the authors of the article on Boorde in Chalmers's *Biographical Dictionary* and of the article in Chambers's *Encyclopedia* have been guilty. Writing from inadequate knowledge, they have done gross injustice to their subject, and the southern critic cannot help feeling that had Boorde been born over the Border he might have met with fairer treatment. Whether the eminent physician will be finally cleared from the charge of immorality brought against him late in life, remains to be seen; the probabilities point in this direction, and it is to be hoped that they will be turned to certainty. But whatever sins he may have committed towards the end of his days, this may at least be said of him without exaggera-

tion, that he was unusually skilled in his profession, and that he was moreover an able scholar, an observant traveller, an interesting writer, and for the greater part of his life a sincerely pious man.

Now the first and perhaps the wisest Merry Andrew lies almost forgotten, and his works have barely survived their author. Few even so much as dip into their spicy pages, few have ever heard of him. Yet he is worth reading, in spite of the neglect into which he has fallen, and his strong cheerfulness deserves not merely admiration but the sincerer tribute of imitation. A merry man he lived for eight and fifty years, brightening others by his quick wit and his sportive sallies; a sadder man he died in the gloom of a prison, leaving many to mourn the loss of their beloved physician. Neither electuaries, nor decoctions, nor the *confection of Alchermes*, nor even the mighty *Pills of Cochee* can grapple with death; the physician may war against this foe in others, but when his turn comes he too must slip from the ranks, leaving his post to another. Yet Andrew Boorde cannot be utterly forgotten; so long as his nation is a mirth-loving people, which takes its pleasures, it is said, with a somewhat sober waggishness, so long shall his nickname be preserved, and his memory be kept undying by those who, unconscious of its origin, freely use it. He sought no doubt the Elixir of Life on earth in the goodly companionship of his fellow philosophers; and now he and they sit quaffing the Elixir of eternal life on the placid plains of heaven, where science has become certainty and faith received its fulfilment. There at least he is cleared of the charge of black hypocrisy, and there let him rest in peace from the envenomed tongue of Poynet and the supercilious sneers of more modern critics.

THE PARSON

HENRY SMITH

“And though he holy were and virtuous,
He was to sinful men not dispitous,
Ne of his speeche dangerous ne dign,
But in his teaching discreet and benign.”

CHAUCER, *Canterbury Tales*, Prologue, 517-520.

THE reign of Elizabeth saw the completion of the Reformation in England, so far as the outward discipline and to a certain extent the inward doctrine of the Church were concerned. But no general measure of reform, however carefully devised, suits all of the parties affected; and the reorganization of the National Church was immediately followed by the birth, or rather the manifestation, of Puritanism. The Calvinistic Articles, the Popish Liturgy, and the Arminian clergy, as by law appointed, did not please the sterner reformers, and many eminent preachers refused to take Orders in consequence. The influence of John Calvin was paramount amongst the Protestant Churches wherever they were found; nay, even in England itself, where much of the ceremonial of the Mass was maintained, the theologians at this period were for the most part Calvinistic in tone if not in disciplinary rigidity. When, therefore, Mary of persecuting fame passed away, the refugees, who had taken shelter amidst the reformed congregations of the Continent, returned once more to their native land, where they fondly hoped that the Church would be established on a Presbyterian basis.

The English exiles on the Continent, when they set about the task of forming themselves into a Church at Frankfort, out of respect for the German Protestants, who were affording them protection, used a simpler service than the one which had contented them during the brief reign of Edward VI. and at home. Fuller, whose loyalty to the *Book of Common Prayer* is above suspicion,

has sympathetically given the essential elements of the newer order of worship. "I. They concluded that answering aloud after the minister should not be used. II. The Litany, surplice, and other ceremonies in the Service and the Sacraments, they omitted as both superfluous and superstitious. III. In the place of the English Confession they used another, adjudged by them of *more effect*, and framed *according* to the *state* and *time*. IV. The same ended, the people sung a Psalm in metre, in a plain tune. V. That done, the minister prayed for the assistance of God's Spirit, and so proceeded to the sermon. VI. After the sermon, a general prayer for all states, and particularly for England was devised, which was ended with the Lord's Prayer. VII. Then followed a rehearsal of the Articles of Belief, which ended, the people sung another Psalm as before. VIII. Lastly the minister pronounced the blessing, *The peace of God*, etc., or the like, and so the people departed."¹ This circumstantial account of an old Puritan Service in one of the Continental churches gives a clear insight into the spirit with which these exiles returned to their native land in or after the year 1558. They had cast adrift many of the ceremonies which they deemed to be tainted with Popery, and they were resolved, as far as possible, to secure the establishment of the English Church upon a simpler basis.

Nor were these exiles alone in their objection to the more ornate ritual which had not merely been sanctioned but enforced by Edward VI. and by his Council. Many ministers scattered up and down the country and in every town esteemed this plainer form of Service as alike more religious, and at the same time more after the pattern of the primitive Church. They loved its simplicity and directness, and they longed for the accession of Elizabeth in the hope of securing its uniform observance. They never hesitated in working for the establishment of the Church, nor would they have shrunk from persecution to enforce their own beliefs upon others; their first object was the national observance of such form of worship as accorded with their own deepest convictions. But when the Virgin Queen came to the throne, with that admirable genius for compromise, which was the salient point of her cautious absolutism, she established the English Church with much of the form and most of the prayers of its

¹ Fuller, *Church History* (1655), Book VIII., Sect. ii. 43, p. 27.

Romanist predecessor. In fact, the rigid doctrinal system of John Calvin was in the ascendant in its main features, while many of the older ceremonies remained to shock the susceptibilities of the sterner enthusiasts, who complained, with a certain appearance of truth, that the Genevan Presbyter masqueraded in the robes of the Popish Bishop. There was at that time no tolerance for Catholic or Puritan; the former of whom suffered chiefly, it is true, for treasonable practices, while the latter was punished because he lifted up his voice against the Church just then established. Nor is it wonderful that the Queen was incensed by the bitterly intolerant language of the Presbyterians, and for the further reason that their opposition was a source of positive danger to the State. The majority of the people clung with an obstinate tenacity to that older faith in which they had been reared; any division, therefore, in the ranks of the Protestants could only serve the interests of the vanquished Romanists. Severe repressive measures, and the vigorous national life, which sprang into being under the wise rule of Elizabeth, crushed the life out of the Puritan resistance to the settled order of things, though some of the more rigid Calvinists suffered hardship, persecution, and even exile for their conscientious contumacy.

The leaders of these sterner souls, to whom the perception of the beauty of life was as dim as their order of Service was bald, denounced the Liturgy as a blasphemous emanation from the "man of sin," as they rudely called the Pope. Some with extreme vehemence asserted that the robes of the bishops were "dish-clouts"—and worse—of the "Scarlet Woman"; while to all the order of Service in the *Prayer Book* was distasteful, if not actually the offscouring of Popery. It cannot be said that these sturdy dissentients agreed amongst themselves; indeed when were the parties of any Church ever so harmonious? But they had one firm bond of union in their resolute opposition to the common foe. Had any of the sects by any unforeseen chance become supreme in the land, it would have been an evil day for such as did not belong to its ranks; for the era of religious tolerance was not yet. The names, which the contending parties lavishly bestowed upon one another, were by no means complimentary, and the slightest blossom of individual independence was blasted by burning threats of everlasting

fire. One of the most pathetic passages in Fuller's *Church History of Britain* describes these early differences in the camp of the reformers with an undertone of sadness that the universal Church of Christ should be so divided against itself.¹

But for all these differences in detail, whether ceremonial or theological, the parson himself, whatever might be his shade of opinion, was a man of no small might. Distinguished from the prevailing foppery by the sombre hues of his dress, he had supreme authority over all the men and women of his parish. He was in fact *the person*, as his official name implies, up to whose stern face the children looked with wondering awe, and during his discourses with no unnatural weariness. He could and did call parochial sinners to the cheerless stool of repentance; nay, had a giddy youth been caught in the heinous offence of kissing a young maiden, with or without her spoken consent, both of the culprits might be set each upon a stool in the face of the whole of the congregation, while the parson enlarged upon the enormity of their sin. Of course this undue rigidity, which froze even the slightest relations of life, did not prevent lovers from performing their accustomed ceremonies; they only took more jealous care that neither the parson himself, nor any one who was likely to carry reports to him, witnessed their affecting little tendernesses. So at work and at play, from the cottage to the throne, the parson exercised a severe sway, tempered by discretion, and gentle and simple alike were subject to his reproof both in and out of the Church. His was the first nose to scent out heresy in his parish; that is to say, to discover any difference of opinion from his own, and his hand was the heaviest to repress freedom of thought.

He was not commonly the ethereal-looking, black-coated being of to-day, the darling of unwedded spinsters of every age and of all degrees, but a vigorous, burly, independent man, often an adept at field sports, and usually able to enforce the strictness of his will by the strength of his arm. His clothes were sometimes black, sometimes dark blue, and often of a cheerful snuff-colour; but whatever their hue, they were of a more artistic pattern than those of his present-day descendant. He commonly wore his cassock, with an under-coat, and a

¹ Book VIII., especially Section iii. and Book IX., Sections i. *et seqq.*

stiffly starched frill round his neck. Sometimes his hat was broad-brimmed ; at other times he wore a skull-cap, and in some cases a *biretta*. His pace was slow and solemn, and his port dignified and stately ; yet he loved a hearty and somewhat broad jest, and his comely presence almost always graced the scenes of rural revelry. It is true that ministers of the stricter sort would have none of such revels in their parishes, if they could help it, and their appearance in the distance was the signal for the flight of the audacious revellers. But such was not the case with the majority of the country parsons, who enjoyed the May games with, to the full, as keen a zest as those who were taking a principal part in their mysteries. His speech from the pulpit was plain and direct, though his sentences were wondrously long, and he did interlard his discourses with copious Greek and Latin and sparser Hebrew quotations. He knew his Bible, that is, the translation known as Cranmer's *Great Bible*, and his sermons lasted for the space of one and, if "he had liberty," or rather licence, of two hours. Nor had his hearers the privilege of being permitted to sleep peacefully during his lengthy exhortations, unless indeed they escaped his hawk's eye. If he caught them napping, like the Speaker in the House of Commons he proceeded to name them, with the addition of a word or two of personal advice ; and few were hardy enough to brave his public reproofs.

The patience of the hearers must have been almost infinite in those days of darkness and long discourses. But it must never be forgotten that there were then no newspapers ; and that the pulpit supplied the place, not merely of the press, but of the more generally diffused education and the numerous libraries of to-day. When a very worthy divine of the present remarked in the hearing of another and less worthy son of nonconformity that, "People would listen to Mr. Gladstone for two hours without expressing any weariness, whereas they would not listen patiently to a sermon for one poor half-hour," the reply was characteristic and to the point. "We may thank heaven that we have not to listen to Mr. Gladstone twice every Sunday." But at a time when books were scanty and schoolmasters inefficient, the church was the place to which men went, not merely for worship, but for information. The preacher was for the most part a man of distinguished and varied learning, who set forth his





The lively Portrature of the Reverend
and Learned Minister of Jesus Christ
M^r Henry Smith.

HENRY SMITH.

From the 1657 Edition of his "Sermons," edited by Thomas Fuller.

stores of information before his hearers in a manner of greater or less interest. Some, indeed, who were behind pillars and in other snug recesses, passed the hour in pleasant dreams, a practice which is not yet obsolete. A witty but wicked old gentleman was heard to remark some time ago, "The preacher took for his text, *He giveth His beloved sleep*: so I slept." Doubtless some of those earlier listeners did sleep: "'Tis a shame," says Fuller in playful earnest, "when the church itself is *Cœmeterium*, wherein the living sleep above ground as the dead do beneath."¹ But whether they slept or not they were obliged to come to church, else they were fined a shilling, which was to go to the poor of the parish, and they incurred the suspicion of Romanism to boot. When once they were before him they were completely at the mercy of the parson, who sternly and even individually denounced their sins, while he stinted them neither in the quantity nor in the quality of his denunciations. The modern divine, who must perforce be more modest and less vehement, may well envy the liberty of speech which his early predecessors enjoyed; but if he be prudent he will imitate them neither in their excessive length nor in their oratorical violence.

Such a parson was Henry Smith, whose name has an undoubtedly familiar sound, but whose works are almost entirely forgotten. Yet he was a preacher of uncommon fame in his own day and for nearly a century after his death, who was great alike in the length and fervour of his sermons, though somewhat limited in breadth. His discourses have a wonderful ring of truth and, be it said without any undue disparagement, of prejudice in their outspoken language, while they are couched in a clear literary style of great and sometimes deeply affecting eloquence. The fat old quarto volume which contains them was published under the superintendence of Thomas Fuller in the year 1657. Its frontispiece represents the portrait of the author quaintly though characteristically engraved by T. Cross. The eminent divine has a delicate, ascetic face based upon a ruff of much stiffness and great apparent discomfort. The eyes are large and bright, the nose strong and pronounced; the mouth, which is shaded by the usual moustache and imperial, is small but firm, and the forehead broad and ample. His cheeks were

¹ *Holy State* (1648), p. 85.

probably tinged with the hectic hue of consumption, of which he died in the prime of his powers. Underneath the engraving is the legend, "The lively Portraiture of the Reverend and Learned Minister of Jesus Christ, Mr. Henry Smith." On the opposite page is an ample title, probably put together by the printer or publisher, which surmounts a curly-tailed dog with his tongue out between the two top and the two bottom teeth. He has three whiskers, which must have caused him much annoyance, on the tip of his nose, four claws upon one fore foot, two on the other, and three on each of the hind feet. This is the representation of the "Sign of the Talbot," where the book was to be had; but, according to his own fierce theology, it might well be a type of the preacher as the watchful dog ready to lift up his voice when the devil assailed the Christian fold. According to the tradition of Islam, the Angel Gabriel discharged this perilous duty when Mohammed was born, who kept away the Arch-enemy from the sacred cradle by pelting him with stones.

Henry Smith, the eldest son and heir of Erasmus Smith of Withcote in Leicestershire, and grandson of John Smith, was born in or about the year 1560.¹ Of his earliest years no account has survived, but he would seem always to have been delicate from his boyhood. Who was his first schoolmaster is unknown; but at the age of thirteen, on July 17, 1573, he was admitted Fellow Commoner of Queen's College, Cambridge, where, however, he did not matriculate. He does not appear to have resided in College, but to have been entrusted by his father to the care of Richard Greenham, the pious and learned Puritan divine of Dry Drayton, who inspired his distinguished pupil with his own tendencies to nonconformity.² That Smith's non-residence at the University upon this occasion was due to his weakly health, seems not improbable; but the reason of his migration to Oxford a little more than two years later is entirely unknown. On March 14, 1575-6,³ however, he matriculated at Lincoln College, where he may have graduated, but where he cannot be shewn to have taken his Master's

¹ Burton, *Leicestershire* (1777), p. 292. Cooper, *Athenæ Cantabrigienses*, Vol. II. p. 103 (1861).

² Brook, *Lives of the Puritans*, Vol. II. p. 108. Brook sets down the date of Smith's birth as 1550, which is certainly inaccurate, as he would have been sent sooner to the University had he been born in that year.

³ Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, Vol. IV. p. 1,372.

degree¹ with any certainty. On none of his printed sermons does he style himself M.A., nor indeed was he called anything more than *theologus*. Of course the absence of the mystic letters does not prove that he was not entitled to assume them if he chose; but it is extremely improbable that he would have failed to follow the common custom in this respect. Of his Oxford life only one hint has survived, and that in an unexpected place. Thomas Nash, who must surely refer to this period of Smith's life, exclaims, "Silver-tongued Smith, whose well-tuned style hath made thy death the general tears of the Muses, quaintly couldst thou devise heavenly ditties to Apollo's lute, and teach stately verse to trip it as smoothly as if Ovid and thou had but one soul. Hence along did it proceed, that thou wert such a plausible pulpit-man, before thou enteredst into the wonderful ways of theology, thou refinedst, preparedst, and purifiedst thy wings with sweet poetry. If a simple man's censure may be admitted to speak in such an open theatre of opinions, I never saw abundant reading better mixt with delight, or sentences which no man can challenge of profane affectation sounding more deep into the heart."² None of Smith's poems have survived to enable the later critic to test this piece of judgment; but it may readily be admitted that Thomas

¹ Cooper, *Athenæ Cantabrigienses*, Vol. II. p. 103. There were two Henry Smiths, Fellow Commoners of Hart Hall, the one of whom took his M.A. on July 9, 1579, and the other on May 3, 1583. Of these the former cannot be our Henry Smith, who would not have been of sufficient standing to have taken his M.A. so early as 1579; nor can the latter be identified with him in spite of Wood, as it seems certain that Smith was not in residence so late as 1583. As far as can be discerned from some chronological perplexities, he was at that time resident at the rectory of Husbands Bosworth in Leicestershire, of which his father was patron. (Burton's *Description of Leicestershire*, 1777, p. 42). Indeed he must have been somewhere in the neighbourhood in 1582, when he exposed the impostor, Robert Dickons of Mansfield (Cooper, *Athenæ Cantabrigienses*, Vol. II. p. 103, for the date). He was sent to investigate this curious case, of which full details appear below, by the Lord Justices on circuit, who would not have sent up to Oxford for him to inquire into a case at Mansfield. If, therefore, Cooper's date of 1582 be correct for the above-mentioned examination, it follows that Smith was doing duty at Husbands Bosworth, though he may not have been rector of the parish. At any rate, if he were not in this place he must have been at home at the very time when he is credited with having taken his Master's degree.

² *Pierce Penniless's Supplication to the Devil* (1592), edited by J. Payne Collier for the Shakespeare Society in 1842, pp. 40-41. Mr. Collier has curiously failed to identify Smith, and his note is a remarkable piece of critical want of sagacity.

Nash in his own province was able to appreciate the merits of greater poets than our parson could have been.

In or about 1581-2 Henry Smith left Oxford and, though heir to a large property, entered upon the ministry of Christ. It cannot be said that he took Orders, seeing that he never subscribed the Articles, apparently from some dissatisfaction with their regulation of discipline, and doubtless with the strong injunction of the twentieth Article concerning this important point.¹ Be that as it may, he seems to have officiated at Husbands Bosworth for some time, though there is no evidence that he was actually the rector of that parish; indeed the contrary seems probable on account of his refusal to take Orders, and from the fact that such a title is never given to him by his contemporaries.² It was in the year 1582 that one of the most remarkable of the events of his life occurred to him. He was probably engaged in fitting himself for his future excellence in preaching, when he received a summons to attend a Court of investigation, to be held at Mansfield, to inquire into the truth of the alleged visions of one Robert Dickons. An actual peep into the country life of the past must always be interesting to those who care to know what manner of men their forefathers were. There is something supremely attractive in old-world simplicity, and when the village credulity of the sixteenth century is disturbed by a modern Pharaoh, who was not merely a dreamer of dreams, but, it must be admitted, a forger of frauds, the interest of the narrative has no tendency to diminish. Supposed demoniacs are not so common in English history, that a typical instance can be lightly passed by with commonplace indifference, and especially when the examinations which led to the discovery of the imposture were conducted with so much tact and skill. The investigation appears to have occupied two days, which were divided by an eloquent sermon delivered in the presence of a full congregation to them and at the culprit, as appears from the direct appeal of the peroration. If the rustic Pharaoh did not confess the frauds of his too inventive fancy, he was threatened with the rack in words which could hardly fail to thrill others besides the miserable victim of his own vanity or folly.

¹ *Life* prefixed to *Sermons*, 1657. Strype, *Life of Aylmer* (1821), pp. 100-102.

² Cooper. *Athenæ Cantabrigienses*, Vol. II. p. 103.

The report of the first day's examination is couched in the following precise terms:—

The Declaration of Henry Smith to the Lords Judges: how he found and how he left Robert Dickons.

When I came first to Mansfield, with your Honours' precept, I found this Robert Dickons in these and like opinions, which he presumed he would hold unto death. He said that he had seen three visions by an angel, which shewed him strange things, promised him rare gifts and power to come. He said that the angel called him Elias, whereupon he affirmed that 'the prophecy of Malachi remains to be fulfilled in him. He said that the angel told him, that he should be a Leper two years, and a Bondman eight years. He avouched that his father should be cast over into ignorance, and that all that he had should perish. He avouched that there should be neither battle nor dearth in this country for eight years, which is the time of his service. He pretended that after two years, his time should come to preach, and that no man should be able to confound him. But before I left him (as the word of God doth always exercise His natural power), he pronounced before us all, "Now I am converted by Scripture"; whereupon he requested me to set down his recantation, which he uttered in these words.

The Confession of Robert Dickons upon the first day's Examination.

"I did believe my visions to be true before I heard the Scriptures prove the contrary, and I now esteem them but a delusion of Satan. Therefore I desire to be set to learning for my own salvation, and for the edifying of my brethren." Witnesses: Wil. Dabridgecourt, Wil. Whaly, Hugh Peace, his master, and a number more.—*Robert Dickons.*

This I trust he spake unfeignedly; and for so much as his desire to learn is commendable, and his gifts not common to men of his degree, as your wisdom shall better see if you talk with him alone, I leave this motion to your honours' good consideration, which can best judge how to quench, or how to kindle such sparks.

The lost sheep is found.—*Henry Smith.*¹

On the Sunday following the first day's examination, the great preacher, probably in the morning, and almost certainly in the parish church of Mansfield, held forth with considerable force on the text of "The lost sheep is found." It can hardly be doubted that the magistrates would be gathered together there, while all who had heard of the matter would do their utmost to gain an entrance to the church. The zeal to hear another man's sins publicly rebuked in his presence has commonly great influence with humanity, and all who heard the preacher would take a keen delight in the exact application of his discourse to the luckless, half-insane youth, who doubtless was standing where all the congregation could see him. Smith used the fluent force of his eloquence to denounce Dickons, whom

¹ Smith, *Three Sermons* (1642), pp. 36-37; Fuller, *Church History* (1655), Bk. IX. p. 142.

he wittily derided with all his exalted professions. "You were sick as nature inclined," he exclaimed, addressing the sinner, "and you say that the angel prophesied you should be a bondman: your country hath done well, as many more, and you say the angel prophesied it should fare well for your sake. This is to prophesy of the weather when the time is past. Who cannot have enough of such angels, if men would believe them? Yet Hanno wrought with more credit than this: he taught birds to sing, *Hanno is a god*; and when they had learned their lessons, he lets them fly in the air, and wheresoever they came they cried, *Hanno is a god*. This had some miracle in it, but *Elias* will face us out with a card of ten."¹

Having thus demolished the prophetic claims of the fictitious *Elias*, the preacher proceeds to answer an objection on the part of the youth, that time had not been given him for the fulfilment of his prophecies. "But you pretend," he continues with no small vehemence, "your time is not yet come, etc. Nay, *Elias*, your time is past, you were filled with the Holy Ghost from your mother's womb, and do ye not believe, or is not your time yet come, wherein men shall believe you? I am weary of these tales, and have been too long in reproving that spirit, which I trust no brother will believe. Mark, therefore, you shall hear, in a word, all which I have spoken; you which bear witness of yourself, which have done nothing wonderful, which speak like other men, which cannot answer in disputation, of whom no prophet hath prophesied, whom no brother hath received, which are not in the number of all the tokens, which come without your wedding garment, which prophesied not according to the faith, which lead us from our belief, which make the Son of Man a liar, which construe the simplicity of the Apostle in parable and figures, which confess the scribes and deny Christ, which presume Christ did not respect the prophecy, which come before you be bidden, which come in at the wrong door, which come to prophesy when the prophets are gone, which think not as the Apostles did, which understand not Christ as His disciples, which make the Spirit prophesy names, which were not called *Elias* from your birth, whose angel speaks to none but yourself, which claim your calling from the prophecy of the Old Testament fulfilled before Christ, which have not the tokens

¹ *The Lost Sheep is Found*, p. 47.

which follow them that believe, which come to destroy, whose father is accursed, which privilege your country above all the promises that were granted to Christ, which teach false doctrine, which pervert the text of the Scripture, which prophesy of things when they are past, which speak darkly to divers senses, which cast yourselves in your own sayings, which proclaim, Who can accuse me of sin, which glory of yourself above that which all men see in you, which will be wiser than the wisest, and more righteous than he which is a chosen man after God's own heart, which rise in these suspicious days, which make a show of holiness, which confess truths to infer lies, which cannot join yourself to the disciples; what, are you a prophet?"¹

The torrent of denunciation, which precedes the rhetorical question, could only have one effect upon the minds of the hearers, who in the silence of their spirits could but answer yes. The wretched being whom it overwhelmed would perforce repent that he had been so foolish as to deem himself wiser than his neighbours, and he would stand glowing with the shame of discovery and shivering with the fear of evil consequences. But Henry Smith had not yet done with his victim; and fierce as the force of his sermon is from the beginning, its power increases as it flows along, until the peroration is reached, which blends pity with anger, and tender appeal with terrific denunciation of punishment in this world and worse in the world to come. One brief sentence would thrill through every nerve in the body of the so-called prophet, and he would doubtless make up his mind to repent and confess his hoax, when he heard the ominous words, "But if thou wilt not return while mercy is ready, I bring thee sorrowful tidings; when Satan shall not help thee, the rack must prove this doctrine. Wilt thou heap God and the devil and man upon thee all at once?"² The force of this appeal to an argument of so much weight as the unveiled threat of torture, would round off the sermon to some purpose and terrify the pitiable impostor into a speedy confession. Few real prophets are able boldly to withstand the writhing torment of the rack, while their false brethren are usually quite ready to throw off their unreal pretensions, if the faintest chance of safety presents itself to their anxious minds.

Such was the course of events with Robert Dickson,

¹ *The Lost Sheep is Found*, pp. 50-51.

² *Idem*, p. 52.

whose imposture faded from him, under the blighting threats of physical pain. Once more he was compelled to come before his ruthless cross-questioner, with the happy result that he acknowledged his carefully-concocted deceit. Henry Smith took elaborate notes of the pretended visions, which he has left recorded thus for the curious investigation of posterity.

Robert Dickons' Confession upon my second Examination, wherein he declareth that he had no visions at all, but that he coined them, and to what end.

The matter of the first vision.—"I did see upon Valentine's Day was eight years, green leaves, which was strange in winter, for which cause I brought them home, and leaves of the same oak in summer became red; it chanced at the same time to thunder and lighten, after this I was visited, as please God, for two years."

The matter of the second vision.—"Four years after I dreamed much like to the matter of the first vision, and the same night it chanced to lighten. (Yet of this I take God to be my Judge), I found a leaf printed in my chamber next morning, with those six sentences, saving only the first line; which leaf, unless it was lost out of my fellow's books, I know not how it came."

The matter of the third vision.—"This time twelve months, I saw a light in the shop above, whereat I was astonished and imagining with myself what it should mean, it came into my head to tell my fellows, which came in and found me afraid, that I had seen an angel in a flame of fire, which called me *Elias*, and bade me write all that I had seen and heard. Hereupon I, remembering my former sights and dreams, thought to make me strange unto men, and so turned all that which I had seen, as if God had shewed me visions. To this confession I take God for my Judge, as I shall be saved in the latter day, but to the other I never swore, though I was never so often examined.—*Robert Dickons.*"

Upon this he yielded up his books into my hands, which I have and keep; and now he hath nothing to shew for that false title.—*Henry Smith.*¹

Thus the two examinations and the fiery sermon had done their work, and the lost sheep was summarily driven back to the fold: whether Robert Dickons was in the first instance simply an impostor, or a nervous sensitive youth starved by the grim discipline of the time into seeing visions, cannot now be decided at the distance of three centuries. The whole of his story is interesting in these days of psychical research, and it seems a pity that no more should be known of him than that he was a not over-truthful visionary. In those days, when the sects of Puritanism were gradually working themselves into shape, many people did see, or profess to see visions of a more or less unprofitable or untruthfully prophetic character.

¹ *Three Sermons made by Mr. Henry Smith* (London, 1642), pp. 36-37.

Thus they gained no small reputation among the simple wonder-loving folk with whom they were brought into contact. When pastors, otherwise comparatively sane and superlatively devout, to say nothing of their being supremely positive in all they uttered, no less than laymen, positively assertive, comparatively devout, and superlatively sane, saw or thought they saw visions, it is not surprising that youths and maidens of the country-side should be similarly influenced by the intense earnestness of the time. There is nothing so contagious as pretensions to the marvellous, nor can there be any doubt that such claims were often put forward in absolute good faith. Nay, the visions themselves, by whomsoever seen, were the glory of the sect to which the seer belonged; though, it must be confessed, that they were asserted to be devices of Satan by the adherents of less-favoured sects. But visions might also be the proofs of heresy, and the sleuth-hounds of Protestant heresy-hunters were to the full as keen-scented and as relentless as their Romanist predecessors. Death was not, it is true, commonly inflicted, unless treason accompanied heresy, in which case many political villains became so-called Romanist martyrs.

It was then no enviable fate to be more than once examined before a court of magistrates certainly not very learned, but who none the less had a high opinion of their sapience in theological matters at the very least. When, too, these opinionated worthies were backed up by a supremely learned and exceptionally acute preacher, the criminal was not likely to escape without being shorn of more than one pen-feather. Such a tribunal must of necessity banish the most harmless visions out of the head of a mystic even. Fear is an admirable corrective to the love of ill-deserved fame, and though under certain circumstances it may inspire many visions, it is no less their cure than their cause. Now the civil power could and did threaten material fire on earth with a more or less sympathetic crowd of spectators, while the preacher, in the burning eagerness of his spiritual zeal, promised immaterial fire before the wholly unsympathetic crowd of the damned, as a requital of such imaginative efforts or outbreaks of free thought. Furthermore, both the powers of the Church and of the State could and did in the present instance threaten the unfortunate victim with the tender mercies of the rack. With three such horrors

before him—nay, with the belief that he might suffer all of the three in due course—the luckless culprit would be only too willing to rid himself of his baggage of dreams. Rats leave a sinking ship, it is said, though how or whither they go is as yet a mystery ; and visions, no matter how authentic, shudder from the alarmed perception of a man, who is destined to be once racked and twice burned. Fire purges metals of dross, and its threat cleanses the timorous mind of visions.

The scene from the past vividly presents itself. There is the squire's dining-hall, decorated perchance by a few family portraits staring out faintly from the black panels, and by scattered trophies of the chase. At the polished oak table the four worthy laymen are seated with puzzled, inquisitive faces set in a fixed determination to find out something either existent or non-existent in the sad-visaged culprit. With them is the silver-tongued Smith, by his stern, penetrating questions smiting terror into the heart of the dreamer of dreams. A silver-tongued orator can be terrible as an inquisitor, as many a terrified defendant knows. What wonder then that he was able to make the unlucky youth, even if he had seen visions, deny them utterly? Fear is the first factor of cowardice, and Robert Dickons was certainly bowed to the ground with fear. But from whatever motive, there can be no doubt that he confessed himself to be an impostor in good time for his own safety. His visions were so harmless, that he might surely have been left in peace ; and though they were supposed to have been inspired by the devil, they cannot be said to have done much credit to the subtlety of their source. Be that as it may, the whole investigation gives a graphic picture of the undoubting credulity of the latter half of the reign of Elizabeth. Many actually believed that the simple prentice lad was divinely inspired, until their belief was scattered to the winds by the powerful clergyman.¹ The might of the clergy was immense,

¹ At the close of *The Lost Sheep is Found*, pp. 54–56, are some of the questions put by Henry Smith to Dickons.

“Whether you are sure you shall live these three years, because you say, after three years you must preach?”

“Whether may a man expect visions from God, because you say, for these three years you are to look for more visions?”

“Whether there hath been neither pestilence, nor dearth, nor war, nor earthquake in your country these five years, nor shall be any time of

though they did not put forward the monstrous sacerdotalist pretensions of the present: they were not priests, they "were giants in those days."

Some time after this episode in the life of his son, and before 1587, Erasmus Smith married for his second wife, Margaret, the widow of Robert Cave, and sister of the first Lord Burleigh, whose interest in our parson was

your continuance there, because the angel so promised? Is this more than ever was granted to Christ?

"Whether it be necessary to salvation to believe all the Articles of the Creed?

"Whether Predestination, Election, etc., are to be preached unto laymen? What free-will had Adam? And what free-will remaineth unto us?

"Whether ministers should have livings or stipends?

"Whether heretics living to themselves, without corrupting others, are to be punished with death?

"Where is hell? and what shall be the manner of punishment there to the reprobate?

"What think you of the Antipodes, and those monstrous people which live in Asia, and of monsters in general?

"What think you of that saying of Christ, This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise? What kind of a place is this, and where, and to what purpose now it serveth, and whether it was a material apple that Adam did eat?

"What think you of our *Common Prayer Book* and *Litany*?

"Whether they which are called Protestants, or those whom we call Puritans, be of the purest religion, and most reformed to the primitive Church?

"Where was the soul of Lazarus, when his body was in the grave?

"Whether Eliseus, cursing the little children, did not sin?

"At what age and stature shall all rise in the resurrection, and whether the wounds and scars shall remain in our bodies glorified?

"Whether images be in no respect tolerable, and whether a man remembering Christ by seeing the Cross doth sin?

"Which is the greatest sin that reigneth this day in England?

"How is the soul created in man, and when it cometh, and how, or in what part it is placed in the body?

"In what estate shall the sun, and moon, the heavens, and elements be after the last day, when there shall be no creature on earth?

"What think you of plays, and representing divine matters, as in pageants?

"Whether all things amongst faithful Christians ought to be common? Acts iv. 32.

"What do you think concerning the bishopping of children?

"What city is described of *John* in the seventh of his Revelation?"

"Answer to every point, or yield."

"Henry Smith of Husbonds Boreswell (Bosworth), at the commandment of the right worshipful his uncle, Master Brian Cave, High Sheriff of Leicestershire." Cf. Fuller, *Church History*, Bk. IX. p. 142.

The foregoing questions might stagger any prophet, much more a poor visionary apprentice. It is interesting to note that Smith came from *Husbonds Bosworth* to conduct his searching and puzzling examination.

thus secured. Burleigh had natural leanings towards the Puritans, whom he only repressed when they became noisily opposed to the ecclesiastical system already established. Like a true Englishman, he was content to leave comparative good alone, in the fear of any change resulting in a worse state of things. But where he could exercise favour he did, and in 1587 he procured the lectureship of St. Clement Danes without Temple Bar for Henry Smith. What the preacher had been doing in the meantime is quite uncertain; but it is not probable that he had actually held a living, or indeed been so much as ordained. He had refused to sign the Articles from some dissatisfaction with their disciplinary regulations, and the only way open to him to exercise his unique gifts of pulpit oratory was to lecture at one of the City churches. The office of lecturer, the salary of which depended upon a benevolent foundation or upon the subscriptions of the congregation, was the natural home of such as were dissatisfied with the government and the ceremonial of the Church, as it was established. In later years, during the troubles of the Civil War, many Royalist divines, including Thomas Fuller, who lectured at St. Clement's, Eastcheap,¹ were thus enabled to preach on the week-day to their old and attached hearers.

What Henry Smith's exact points of difference from the English Church were, it is difficult to decide. Once at least he condemns such schismatics as the Brownists and Barrowists with extreme force. "I therefore wish them to cease their slander against this Church, and to cease their damnable schism, and to be reconciled to that Church of ours, from whence they have foolishly departed: for howsoever imperfect a Church it be (whose imperfections God cure in His own good time,) yet shall they never be able to show otherwise, but that the Church of England is the true Church of God, from which it is *utterly unlawful to make a separation*."² The reader of such a passage as the foregoing may not unnaturally ask why then Smith did not subscribe. It would seem, however, that he was speaking of the doctrine of the Church, not of its discipline; nor is he ever found including in his denunciation of schismatics the Presbyterians of the Genevan

¹ *Comment. on St. Matthew*, Dedication.

² *God's Arrow against Atheists*, p. 96. Cf. *The Lost Sheep is Found*, p. 46.

model, with whom he was probably in pronounced sympathy. But he condemned rebellion against the established order of things, doubtless in the vain hope that a simpler and purer order would one day take its place. Such is the position of the modern Broad Churchman, which is pathetic in its utter hopelessness. Reforms in Church government are not brought about in this fashion, any more than changes in theology. Harder fighting and bolder champions are needed, if great results are to be achieved. Buddha left his kingdom to be a world-wide prophet, and modern reformers must imitate him in this at least, if they wish to secure reforms. Whatever were his scruples Smith remained loosely attached to the national Church, though he was true to himself in his refusal to commit himself to that which was untrue to him.

In 1587 he became lecturer at St. Clement Danes by the choice of the parishioners and the favour of Lord Burleigh,¹ who was patron of the living. The prudent statesman was too cautious, however, to appoint his young connection by marriage without a testimonial, and he applied to Smith's former tutor, Richard Greenham. The answer was full and diplomatic. Greenham left the judgment of his pupil's capacities in Greek and Latin to the noble earl, and went on to say that, "he was well versed in the Holy Scriptures, religious and devout in his character, moderate and sober in his opinions, discreet and temperate in his behaviour, industrious in his studies and pursuits, and of a humble spirit and upright heart, joined with a fervent zeal for the glory of God and the welfare of souls."² Smith's moderation would naturally be the quality which would commend him most to Burleigh, who knew its value in those still unsettled times. But the fact that the Lord Treasurer applied to a noted Puritan for a testimonial shows the leaning of his own sympathies; and Smith's tendency towards the simpler form of worship would in no way prejudice him with his great patron. In spite of the moderation of the young preacher, he did not remain unmolested long in his lectureship. In 1588 some of those worshippers, whose object in coming to church is chiefly to catch the preacher tripping, and then to report him to the higher authorities, com-

¹ Brook, *Lives of the Puritans*, Vol. II. p. 109.

² Strype, *Aylmer* (1821), pp. 100, 101.

plained to Aylmer, Bishop of London. They asserted that Smith had decried the *Prayer Book* and refused to subscribe to Archbishop Whitgift's three articles with reference to discipline.¹ There are heresy-hunters in most of the churches, whose theology is more scrupulous than either their charity or indeed their common sense; and it was from the tender mercies of these that Smith suffered both persecution and for a short time suspension.

The grounds of complaint against him were three. In the first place it was avouched that he had been elected in a democratic fashion by the minister and congregation of the church in question. To this charge, which does not seem so terrible in these days of nonconformity, Smith's reply was couched in grave, dignified, and modest language. "I was recommended," he urged, "by certain godly ministers, who had heard me preach in other places in this city, and thereupon accepted by the parish, and entertained with a stipend raised by voluntary contribution. And his lordship calling me to preach at Paul's Cross, never moved any such question to me. Nevertheless, if any error have been committed by me or the parish through ignorance, our joint desire is to have his lordship's good allowance and approbation, for the said exercise of my function in his lordship's diocese." The second accusation was his publicly-expressed disapproval of the *Book of Common Prayer*: to which Smith replied conclusively, "However his lordship may have been informed against me, I never used a speech in any of my sermons, against the *Book of Common Prayer*; whereof the parish doth bear me witness in this my supplication to your lordship." Thirdly, the unknown accusers complained that he had not subscribed certain Articles, which the bishop had required of him. Of this charge Smith was guilty, if guilty it be to refuse to sign any Articles against the individual conscience: hence his reply was more guarded, but not less frank. "I refuse not to subscribe to any Articles," he pleaded, "which the law of the realm doth require of men in my calling; acknowledging with all humbleness and loyalty her Majesty's sovereignty in all causes, and over all persons within her Majesty's dominions; and yielding my full consent to *all articles of faith and doctrine*, taught and ratified in this church, according to a statute in that behalf provided, the 13th

¹ Brook, *Lives of the Puritans*, Vol. II. p. 109.

year of her Majesty's reign. And therefore I beseech his lordship not to urge upon me any other subscription than the law of God and the laws positive of this realm do require."¹

The accusations with their appended replies were apparently submitted to Lord Burleigh, by whose help Smith was reinstated in his lectureship, and to whom the collected edition of some of his sermons was gratefully dedicated. Doubtless the complainants were well satisfied with the result of their mischievous endeavours to permanently oust a notable man from a post for which he was peculiarly well fitted. But the Lord Treasurer had more sense and a sounder judgment than they, and Smith's suspension cannot have lasted for more than a few months at the most.² He resumed his labours with an added and continually increasing popularity, so that "his church was constantly crowded with auditors of no mean rank and quality"; while the poorer people heard him gladly.³ Towards the beginning of the year 1589 William Harwood, the Rector of St. Clement Danes, fell ill, and when he was given up, his parishioners presented a petition to Lord Burleigh to present the living to the lecturer. The petition "was signed with the hands of divers of St. Clement's and Lion's Inns, and the two Churchwardens, the one a grocer, the other a locksmith, and a good number besides of ordinary tradesmen, as smiths, tailors, saddlers, hosiers, haberdashers, glaziers, cutlers, and such like, most of them setting their marks." Strype calls the petition itself a rude one; but it contained the root of the whole matter. It ran thus:—"That if there were any towards his lordship, whom his honour affected, and was willing to prefer thereunto, they most humbly and instantly importuned his lordship (notwithstanding to lay them aside, and) to prefer Mr. Smith in this, and them some other way, as his lordship had many. And in behalf of themselves they set forth, that (if this might be obtained) then Mr. Smith's living should be ascertained, (which was but precarious before,) and they eased of his stipend, (and so a charge taken from them,) and their desires satisfied in enjoying him for their parson. In fine, giving this character of him, that his

¹ Strype, *Aylmer* (1821), pp. 101, 102.

² Brook, *Lives of the Puritans*, Vol. II. p. 110.

³ *Collected Sermons* (1657); Fuller's *Life*, p. 2.

preaching, living, and sound doctrine, had done more good among them than any other that had gone before, or, which they doubted should come after.”¹

The terms of the foregoing petition suggest one or two matters worthy of brief consideration. In the first place there is the undoubted fact of the preacher's popularity with his hearers of all classes. But these in their turn, though they would not part with him so long as there was no opportunity of hearing him for nothing, were ready when the opportunity occurred to obtain his services with greater economy to themselves. There is a quaint naïvety in the phrase, “and so a charge be taken from them,” which points to the fact that even in those days the members of endowed churches preferred Christian thrift to Christian liberality, and were content to leave the support of the ministry rather to the dead hand of their ancestors, than to dip their living hands very deeply into their own pockets. That Henry Smith did not accept the living is certain, though why is not known. Richard Webster, once fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, was instituted on the twenty-second of May, 1589, while the eminent lecturer continued to hold his freer position. Probably his difficulties in subscription increased with his years, since it seems certain that had he been able to comply with the requirements of the Bishop of London, he would have had the patronage of Lord Burleigh. However that may be, he continued to lecture until 1590, when the advance of that consumption which took him off in his young manhood prevented him from discharging his duties. He retired to Husbands Bosworth, where he busied himself in collecting and editing for the press his sermons, many of which had been already published from rough notes taken during their delivery. But in 1591 he passed away before he saw the issue of the volume in such form as he desired, and he was buried at Husbands Bosworth on the fourth of July.²

The book of Henry Smith's sermons is dedicated, as has been said, by its author to the first Lord Burleigh, though all of its various parts were not actually collected into one volume until 1657. It consists of a small but fat quarto of nearly one thousand pages, bound in old calf,

¹ Strype, *Aylmer* (1821), pp. 102, 103.

² Anno 1591. Henricus Smith, Theologus, filius Erasmi Smyth, armigeri sepult. fuit 4to. die Julii.—*Registers of Husbands Bosworth*.

now fast cracking beneath the weight of divinity which it contains. The worms have tried to make their way into the copy from which the succeeding quotations have been taken; but finding it a somewhat tough morsel, they have early desisted from their theological pursuits. After the first dedication follows a brief life of the author, purporting to have been written for the volume by Thomas Fuller, which is an extended copy of the short account of the eminent divine, as it had already appeared in the *Church History*.¹ That Fuller edited the volume is possible, since he was attracted to Henry Smith in the first instance by his method of dealing with Robert Dickons. That his name would serve to assist in the sale of the volume is certain, from his eminence as a man of letters, and that this fact influenced the publisher cannot be doubted. But the narrative itself bears the mint-mark of the Church historian, and as is usual with him presents a concise but striking portrait of the great original. He consulted his author's surviving brother Sir Roger, or Robert Smith, and he embodied the results of his inquiries into a delicate picture of the man himself. "In his life he was so spotless, that malice was afraid to bite at his credit, into which she knew her teeth could not enter."² Such is the testimony of one who knew how to appreciate merit wherever he found it, and who was never afraid to set down in writing the due praises of those who had deserved well of their race.

Furthermore, the witty historian adds, "Whereas the *Sermons* of those days are now grown out of fashion (such is our age's curiosity, and affectation of novelty), Smith's *Sermons* keep up their constant credit, as appears by their daily impressions, calculated for all times, places, and persons, so solid that the learned may partly admire, so plain that the unlearned may perfectly understand them. And as he was endowed with an excellent gift in *preaching*, so likewise in *prayer*, both for aptness and fullness of confessions, petitions, and praises, with fervency of spirit, to pour them out to God, in the name of Christ."³ That such praise is praise indeed no one can deny, and that it is fully merited every reader of the sermons and prayers in question will readily admit. A preacher's life is mainly made up of thought and words, and both the

¹ Bk. IX. p. 142.

² *Collected Sermons, Life*, p. 2.

³ *Idem*, p. 2.

thought and the words of Henry Smith are rich and powerful. He was a learned, eloquent, keen, and witty preacher, who never wrapped up his talent in a napkin, nor scorned to use the invaluable gift of humour to brighten his exhortations. Those who are used to the less pungent and more indirect style of to-day will wonder at his boldness ; but the preachers of the periods of the early Reformation and of Puritanism were in the habit of saying what they meant with untrammelled freedom. If they found a particular sin prevalent they never failed to hold up the mirror of truth to its native hideousness, and they rebuked the sinner with unfaltering resolution and unmistakable plainness of speech. Good Queen Bess might furiously interrupt the Bishop of Chichester, as he preached at her, as well as before her, with the fierce exclamation, "By God, sir, I will unfrock you !" But she was the head of the Church, while the Bishop was her very humble servant. She had made him, and she could unmake, if she chose.

But with the mass of the laity such freedom was impossible ; no country squire or city magnate could venture upon such a course with impunity. Nay, if he should venture to interrupt the full tide of the discourse, he had two possible punishments to dread. He might be indicted for brawling in church, the punishment of which was a severe fine. But what was worse, he might be set on the stool of repentance, a spectacle for gods and men, to say nothing of the curious eyes of women. The rest of the congregation were perforce no less patient under the most withering denunciation of general and individual sins ; indeed, their only refuge was sleep. But there were not many who ventured to seek this city of refuge ; the eyes of the preacher were like those of Lynceus of old, and they were sure to fix the unhappy transgressor before he had had sufficient time to thoroughly compose himself to slumber. His dreams were rudely broken, and he rarely ventured upon a second offence of this kind. How any could sleep under the terrific lashings which commonly fell upon their consciences it is not easy to understand, though it has been whispered by gentler authorities than the accomplished author of *Mrs. Cawdle*, that some husbands have been known to sleep during the nocturnal reproaches of their too eloquent wives. This is a subject too delicate for the handling of the unwedded historical

Muse, and what is more, it is perhaps somewhat outside the scope of the present inquiry. Hence it must be abandoned with no little reluctance to the philosophical students of human depravity.

Henry Smith was to the full as plain-spoken as any of his clerical brethren. He preached so forcibly and with such transparent simplicity, that all of his hearers could understand him. Often he must have made the ears tingle, and the cheeks burn, and the hearts throb of most of his listeners by his pointed, not to say personal, rebukes. Conscious of his power, and inspired by the sincere desire of benefiting those to whom he spoke, he spared no sinner, however exalted, while the humble could not hope to escape from his heart-stirring reproofs. Indeed, great and small alike awaited their turn at the whipping-post with as much composure as they could muster, cheered by the assurance that others would smart as keenly as themselves. His style is marred by but few of the peculiar affectations of his age, and despite the inordinate length of some of his sentences, he can be read to-day with as much profit as when he thundered from his pulpit three centuries ago. Commonplace language fitted with almost perfect illustrations served him well in driving home the moral, and if his soul were in heaven, his feet were firmly planted on the solid ground of sound sense. Upon occasion he could be terse and epigrammatic, and his felicity in the homiletic interpretation of Scripture must strike even the casual reader. His learning is rarely obtruded, but it forms the background of every discourse. He might occasionally quote Greek and Latin; that was part of the preacher's duty in those days. But his translations of his quotations are so forcible, that their meaning is branded into the brain of the reader. Pathos, tenderness, unmitigated severity, sparkling humour, passionate pleading, and pitiless ridicule are the weapons of his armoury, and he uses each in its proper place with unerring precision and marked effect. In short, he was in all respects a preacher among the very best of that distinguished age, and there can be little doubt that his sermons greatly assisted the formation of the style of such famous divines as Thomas Fuller and Robert South. Their popularity speaks well for the age in which they were published, and it seems a pity that they are only known to the few in this age, when distinguished preachers are few and far between.

The treatise with which the *Collected Sermons* of the edition of 1657 opens is entitled a *Preparative to Marriage*, a theme upon which he, as a bachelor, could at all events discourse without prejudice. The substance of the tract was an address given on the Sunday previous to the marriage of some of his friends; and it overflows with wise, pungent, and choicely-expressed, if rather one-sided sayings. Believing, as did all who were tinged with Puritanism, that woman in the Garden of Eden was the sinful source of human misery, while he doubtless loved the individual woman, he spoke with unqualified severity of the sex. He took and maintained with almost convincing power and no small prejudice, the Pauline view of the subjection of women. This is not the place in which it is fitting, if needful, to enforce the truth of the complete subjection of the sterner masculine to the persistence of the tenderer feminine portion of the race. Indeed, the facts are so transparent, that no other proof than ocular demonstration is required to justify the foregoing proposition. But Henry Smith had not a shred of sympathy with the claims put forward in highly offensive and sometimes coarse language by the new woman of our modern inventive age. Had he met such a person he would have spoken the unvarnished truth to her in his own straightforward fashion; and if his view of the place of woman in society might be untrue, at all events he would have been able to see and to denounce the fallacious claims of the hermaphrodite bantams of the nineteenth century.

But waiving the rival claims of the sexes to supremacy, and leaving them to wisely divide their sovereignty, it must be confessed that Henry Smith's advice to young brides springs from that fond dream of wifely submission which is dear to the inexperienced bachelor, a dream as beautiful as it is evanescent. Had he been bound in the flowery chains of wedlock, or shared in the experience of a worthy Scottish divine, he might have been less positive in his affirmations. The kindly doctor entered a house, where the husband and wife were grappling with one another on the floor in deadly conflict. "Wha's the head o' this house?" he inquired in stern surprise. The man, whose head happened to be uppermost, though his back was on the floor, quietly made answer, "Sit yersel' doon, meenister, sit yersel' doon; that's just the point we're after tryin' to settle the noo." Inexperience is the skilled creator

of many glorious ideals, which experience has an ugly habit of rudely dispelling; hence Henry Smith speaks with some ignorance of the possibilities of the case, when he describes the signs of a good wife. Echoing the sarcastic aphorism of Euripides, he says: "The third sign is her speech, or rather her silence, for the ornament of a woman is silence; and, therefore, the law was given to the man rather than to the woman, to show that he should be the teacher, and she the hearer. As the echo answereth but one, for many which are spoken to her, so a maid's answer should be in a word; for she which is full of talk is not likely to be a quiet wife." In one possible event of life every young man will sympathise with the preacher, when he insists that, "A maid's answer should be in a word," and that is, when she is expected to, and not uncommonly does say "Yes."¹

But to pronounce such a statement as the one just quoted is to take a scarcely fair advantage of the pulpit; for it would of necessity provoke controversy, if not contradiction, in the heaving breasts of the larger half of the congregation. Some of them beyond a doubt would have gladly followed the illustrious example of the truculent Jennie Geddes, and hurled a cutty-stool at their detractor's head. In Whalley Church, the old monks, bachelors as they were, have shown a far truer perception of the proprieties, to say nothing of the relative position of the sexes after marriage. On one of the *misereres* is carved a quaint illustration of domestic submission. In this case the good wife is soundly belabouring her lord and master with a frying-pan, a weapon of much availing force, as it covers so much ground, or rather body. Our author, however, holding fast to his favourite doctrine of conjugal submission in spite of, nay, perhaps in consequence of observation, strongly insists that the wife should not *answer again* her husband, in which every man will admit that the preacher was right. This section of his discourse he wittily entitles, "Husbands must hold their *hands*, and wives their *tongues*,"² and he utters to the former a pregnant and beautiful truth concerning the latter. "Her cheeks," he insists, "are made for thy lips, not for thy fists."³ From this touching saying it is manifest that Henry Smith's observation had taught him that there was

¹ *A Preparative to Marriage*, p. 21.

² *Idem*, p. 32.

³ *Idem*, p. 32.

some foundation for the practice of the cruel old proverb :—

“A spaniel, a woman, and a walnut-tree,
The more you beat them, the better they be.”

Whatever may have been his opinion of that barbaric statement of uncivilised man, he gives a simple *recipe* for the preservation of quiet in the life of the home, which neither husband nor wife can deny to be true. “Therefore,” he pleads, “they which keep silence are well said to hold their peace, when words break it.”¹ Would that all disturbers of domestic tranquility would bear this pregnant aphorism in mind, and so relieve life of many of its most anxious hours.

Though he had chosen no wife for himself, a circumstance which may be due to his perception of his growing illness, Henry Smith gives evidence of having spent some thought upon the subject. He lays great stress upon the wisdom of avoiding a hasty choice. With the insight of a profound thinker and a close observer he asserts : “He which will know all his wife’s qualities before he be married to her, must see her eating, and walking, and working, and playing, and talking, and laughing, and chiding, or else he shall have less with her than he looked for, or more than he wished for.”² The common sense of this pronouncement is indisputable, and the bachelor-parson has anticipated in stronger language the more diffuse words of many a modern novelist of the masculine gender. It cannot be said that his warning has served the world much, for hasty marriages are still as common as blossoms in spring ; but that he spoke the truth more than one too swiftly united, though ill-matched couple has been forced to admit. But Smith was not opposed to matrimony in itself ; it was those unsuitable marriages, which are the result of wealth, convenience, social position, and what not, which attracted his unsparing condemnation. Of the blessing of a good wife he speaks with much eloquence and sincere conviction ; but his eulogy of a virtuous woman does not prevent him from perceiving the horrors of her opposite. He lifts up the voice of pitiless denunciation against those who make hasty or foolish marriages, and concludes his exhortation with the following sarcastic advice : “If a man long for a bad wife, he were best to go

¹ *A Preparative to Marriage*, p. 37.

² *Idem*, p. 23.

to hell a-wooing, that he may have choice.”¹ There is just this one remark to be made concerning such ironical counsel. If the majority be doomed to that part of the torrid zone which needs no more distinctive specification, there will naturally be more of the softer sex down below than of their sterner brethren, as their numbers are superior on earth. But it is not our object to defend the silver-tongued Smith, who can take good care of himself, in his outspoken prejudice and conspicuous lack of gallantry. Let those who would confute him read his witty pages, and they will find enough material to occupy their leisure profitably and for no inconsiderable time.

It must not be supposed for a moment that the great preacher had any desire to spare the husband, though he spoke with stern severity of the wife. The whole of the discourse shows that his object was to enable his hearers to secure connubial bliss. But the greater part of his advice is based upon the questionable doctrine of the husband's certain and indisputable supremacy over his wife. About this problem it never enters into his head to entertain or to suggest a doubt, and if his harangue presents a true picture of the conjugal relations of the people of his day, the masculine tyrants must have lived in a veritable golden age, though they may have ruled with a rod of iron. Yet for all his mannish prejudice, to read him carefully would be a wholesome corrective to the undisciplined declamations of those unwomanly women who deem man to be a mistake because he has not made the profound mistake of falling in love with them. Whether these obtrusive daughters of an age of transition like it or not, one more quotation must be made to illustrate the preacher's view upon this important subject. “The man and the wife are partners,” he says truly, “like two oars in a boat; therefore he must divide offices, and affairs, and goods with her, causing her to be feared and revered, and obeyed of her children and servants like himself; for she is an under-officer in his commonweal, and therefore she must be assisted and borne out like his deputy, as the prince standeth with his magistrates for his own quiet, because they are the legs to bear him up.”² Whether this represents an ideal home or not, it is comparatively certain that there would be little friction therein if the rules laid down were faithfully observed.

¹ *A Preparative to Marriage*, p. 25.

² *Idem*, p. 31.

If Henry Smith believed in the subjection, as it is called, of women, he had little sympathy with extravagance in female dress, which outdid even the follies of the masculine attire of his time. A Puritan in his tastes and in his simplicity, he once exclaimed, "I would that all the wisdom of Elias could move England to learn of her sister of Geneva, then we should have more religion and less ceremonies."¹ His dislike of ornate ritual in worship coloured his tastes in dress; indeed, he seems to have abhorred useless show of every description. It may be that his artistic sense was limited, but it cannot be denied that there was some reason for the following bitter protest: "This is the folly of some men to lay all their pride upon their wives; they care not how they sloven themselves, so their wives jet like peacocks. But Peter doth commend Sarah (1 Pet. ii. 5) for her attire, and not Abraham, showing that women should brave it no more than men; and God made Eve's coat of the same cloth that he made Adam's. They covered themselves with leaves, and God derided them; but now they cover themselves with pride, like Satan, which is fallen down before them like lightning. Ruffle upon ruffle, lace upon lace, cut upon cut, four and twenty orders, until the woman be not so precious as her apparel; that if any man would picture vanity, he must take a pattern of a woman, or else he cannot draw her likeness. As Herodias was worse for her fine dancing, so a woman may have too many ornaments. Frizzled locks, naked breasts, painting, perfume, and specially a rolling eye are the fore-runners of adultery, and he which hath such a wife hath a fine plague. Once women were married without dowries, because they were well nurtured; but now if they weighed not more in gold than in godliness, many would sit like nuns without husbands."²

Henry Smith seems to have had in mind the picture in the *Pia Desideria* of Herman Hugo, the Jesuit, who has spitefully represented Queen Elizabeth under the type of vanity, when he composed this fearful tirade against female dress. Whether he would have ventured to have spoken so plainly in the presence of good Queen Bess may well be doubted, who could hardly have taken his strictures in good part. It must be owned, in spite of the

¹ *The Lost Sheep is Found*, p. 46.

² *A Preparative to Marriage*, pp. 37-38.

preacher's denunciations, that the finery so pitilessly held up to ridicule is often by no means unbecoming, and is well calculated to attract the attention of man to fond woman, who is rigidly prohibited from telling her love. Some of the good parson's hearers might perhaps blush as they listened to his burning words, though that is doubtful, and go home resolved to amend the error of their ways. But Sunday resolutions are seldom performed on Monday, and doubtless, when the affecting moment was passed, they would go forth to buy a new and becoming head-tire, or some other similar piece of beauty's armoury. No doubt Henry Smith spoke the truth in his characterisation of the prevailing extravagance in dress ; but it is exasperating to have these smaller sins paraded in public from the pulpit, and had he not been protected by the sentiment of the times he could hardly have missed Actæon's fate. But reverence for his sacred office saved him from the fury of his fair listeners, who would be compelled to content themselves with the tamer process of pulling his arguments into pieces when they returned to their homes.

Having spoken at some length of the duties of the husband to the wife, of the wife to the husband, and of both to their servants, he proceeds to the consideration of the children. Here, like all the unmarried, he does not hesitate to give good advice freely ; and it must be admitted that, though he spoke from the fulness of inexperience, he could at least take an impartial view of the perfections of other people's children. "Well doth David," he urges, "call children arrows, for if they be well bred, they shoot at their parents' enemies ; and if they be evil bred, they shoot at their parents."¹ These profound words express a pathetic truth pointed in a distinctly original manner, which is every day adding sombre illustrations to the book of experience. Leaving the children to be cared for with the utmost possible tenderness and wisdom by their parents, our author utters a few thoughtful words upon the closeness of the relations of married life, and he concludes an admirable address, though something of the longest, with a touching and beautiful prayer for the happiness of the wedded couple. That the address when delivered must have been much shorter goes without saying, but in its extended form it is fresh, strong, true, and helpful. Who the particular couple were, who were about

¹ *A Preparative to Marriage*, p. 43.

to take the fateful step, does not transpire; but that makes little difference to the point of the exhortations. The appropriateness of its pungent counsels and its sound common sense, not untainted by prejudice, cannot be disputed; nay, more, it would form a better guide to future comfort than that much belauded but highly insipid work, *How to be Happy though Married*.

All of Henry Smith's sermons, however, do not relate to matrimony, though bachelors have been notoriously fond of that fascinating theme. His practical sense led him to lay down wise regulations for every part of daily life. He showed that he understood men well, though he was young in years, and he well knew how to point out their sins with much vigour and general truth. Amongst many other subjects he has one powerful discourse entitled *A Glass for Drunkards*, which must have been the source of Fuller's more alliterative, but less appropriate title of *A Glass for Gluttons*. So quaint and suitable a title naturally suggests an equally quaint treatment of the subject, and the reader is not disappointed. But the glass is full of a bitter tonic mingled with good wine and a spice of old-fashioned humour. Noah, the planter of the vine, and discoverer of its soothing juice, is fearlessly presented to the hearers as an exact example of sin and repentance. No more naïve description of the venerable patriarch, upon an occasion in which he did not show himself venerable, could easily be found than the following, which is, furthermore, infinitely dramatic. "It is said that drunken porters keep open gates; so when Noah was drunken, he set all open; as the wine went in, so the wit went out; as the wit went out, so his clothes went off. Thus Adam, which began the world at first, was made naked with sins, and Noah, which began the world again, is made naked with sin, to show that sin is no shrouder, but a stripper. This is one fruit of the vine more than Noah looked for; for instead of being refreshed and comforted, he was stripped and scorned."¹ This *glass* is filled to the brim with excellent liquor; keen, invigorating, sparkling, and bitter, the draught is most refreshing. One of the passing thoughts admirably anticipates the adage, "One man's meat, another man's poison," with more truth, it would seem, to morals than to nature. "There is a wise eye, and there is a foolish eye," says the preacher. "The wise

¹ *A Glass for Drunkards*, pp. 284, 285.

eye is like the bee, which gathereth honey of every weed ; the foolish eye is like the spider, which gathereth poison of every flower.”¹ One more pointed epigram may be selected from this pungent discourse, as a bee’s wing may be found in a certain kind of port, and having quoted it, we may leave the glass for drunkards to drain to their abiding profit. “As the eye seeth all things and cannot see itself, so we see other men’s faults, but not our own.”² A more excellent simile could hardly be found than this, which has the marked advantage not always common to preachers of combining a profound truth with the certainty of being understood.

A large experience as a popular preacher had taught Henry Smith the different value of different hearers, and he was convinced that there was not merely an art of preaching, but an art of hearing. On this fruitful topic he has two trenchant and uncompromising sermons, which, as he says, “teach a way to remember sermons or counsel afterwards, as well as presently, and how every sermon shall take away some corruption from the hearer.” Nor was such an art of hearing unnecessary in those long-suffering days, when sermons lasted for an hour at least, and sometimes for two. The present-day hearer is treated to shorter sermons, but some of Henry Smith’s remarks apply with no less force to a more impatient generation than when they fell from his lips. Do not these words, for example, exactly describe a modern, as well as an old-world, congregation? “Some come to service to escape forfeiture, and then they stay the sermon for shame ; some come because they would not be counted atheists ; some come because they would avoid the name of Papists ; some come to please their friends. One hath a good man to his friend, and lest he should offend him, he frequents the preachers, that his friend may think well of him. Some come with their masters and mistresses for attendance. Some come with a fame ; they have heard great speech of the man, and therefore they will spend one hour to hear him once, but to see whether it be so as they say. Some come because they be idle ; to pass the time they go to a sermon, lest they should be weary doing nothing. Some come with their fellows. One saith, ‘Let us go to the sermon.’ ‘Content,’ saith he, and he goeth for company. Some hear the sound of a voice, as they pass by

¹ *A Glass for Drunkards*, pp. 286, 287.

² *Idem*, p. 287.

the church, and step in before they be aware. Another hath some occasion of business, and he appoints his friends to meet him at such a sermon, as they do at Paul's. All these are accidental hearers, like children, which sit in the market, and neither buy nor sell." ¹

With the exception of the first class of church-goers, and perhaps one more of the long list, how many are there to-day whose motives are more exalted than those which Henry Smith has set forth in exact detail? But he has not yet done with the various kinds of hearers, and his language gains force as it flows along. "As ye come with divers motions," he says, "so ye hear in divers manners: one is like an Athenian, and he hearkeneth after news: if the preacher say anything of our armies beyond the sea, or Council at home, or matters of Court, that is his lure. Another is like the Pharisee, and he watcheth if anything be said that may be wrested to be spoken against persons in a high place, that he may play the devil in accusing of his brethren; let him write that in his tablets too. Another smacks of eloquence, and he gapes for a phrase, that when he cometh to his Ordinary, he may have one figure more to grace and worship his tale. Another is discontent, and he never pricketh up his ears, till the preacher come to gird against someone he spiteth, and when the sermon is done, he remembereth nothing which was said to him, but that which was spoken against others. Another cometh to gaze about the church; he hath an evil eye, which is still looking upon that from which Job did avert his eye. Another cometh to muse; so soon as he is set, he falleth into a brown study; sometimes his mind runs on his market, sometimes on his journey, sometimes on his suit, sometimes on his dinner, sometimes on his sport after dinner; and the sermon is done before the man thinks where he is. Another cometh to hear; but so soon as the preacher hath said his prayer he falls fast asleep, as though he had been brought in for a corpse, and the preacher should preach at his funeral." ²

Such are the classes of hearers to whom the popular preacher was subjected; many of them must have been present at the very time during which he was detailing their various sins, and according to the promptings of the natural man, each would point the superior finger of imag-

¹ *The Art of Hearing*, pp. 307, 308.

² *Idem*, p. 308.

inary scorn at his neighbour. Nay, all would combine to cheerfully nudge any sleeper, who might be near them, to his own discomposure and that of the rest of the congregation. It cannot be denied that some elderly worshippers go to church with the express object of enjoying a quiet nap during the sermon: that is a fact capable of verification every Sunday. A venerable deacon of a Northumbrian chapel, the very moment that the preacher took his text, elaborately spread a large bandana handkerchief over his head, and, without making any secret of the matter, deliberately went to sleep. He did not admit the base insinuation—who ever did? He asserted that he always listened best with his eyes shut. Nor is he a solitary example of that class of people who adopt this comfortable method of hearing sermons. Nay, one of his drowsy brethren, whose courteous bows to the preacher, though involuntary, were not ungracefully repeated at irregular intervals during the discourse, had an unpleasant habit of doubting the orthodoxy of sermons which he had never heard. It must be confessed, then, that the silver-tongued preacher's witty and pungent words show subtle powers of observation, and their truth could easily be confirmed by more modern pulpit orators, concerning the lazy listeners of a later period.

But he was too prudent and keen-witted to lay the whole of the blame for their laxity of attention upon the shoulders of the much-enduring hearers. An eloquent preacher himself, he realized how much depended upon the method of preaching to interest and to quicken the congregation. Doubtless there were many sticks in the pulpit of his day, as there are in ours; and a dry stick requires much rubbing before it can produce flame in itself and communicate warmth to its surroundings. Dry rot not uncommonly begins with the pulpit, and in such a dire strait sleep is the only refuge of those who sit in the pew. With preachers of this wooden or negligent type Henry Smith had small patience, and though he admitted that "bad hearers make bad preachers," he gave a wise piece of advice to his brother-parsons, who failed to perceive the necessity of preparation. "Many loathe preaching," he says, "as the Jews abhorred the sacrifice of slubbering priests, which cared not what they offered: and the greater sort imagine that there is no more wisdom in the Word of God than their teachers show out of it.

What a shame is this, that the preachers should make preaching be despised ! In the forty-seventh chapter of Jeremiah there is a curse upon them which do the business of the Lord negligently : if this curse do not touch them which do the chiefest business of the Lord negligently, it cannot take hold of any other. Therefore let every preacher first see how his notes do move himself ; and then he shall have comfort to deliver them to other, like an experienced medicine, which himself hath proved.”¹ The wisdom of this final sentence is indisputable, and if the preachers of our country felt and acted upon this important truth, their hearers would be more numerous, and better contented with what they heard.

The temptation to linger over Smith’s sermons is great, and the volume which contains them, like a half-wild garden, may contain some weeds, but it shines none the less with many rare and choice flowers. To cull a nosegay of these is a delightful occupation, but it must not prevent a brief excursion into his once famous and now almost-forgotten tract, *God’s Arrow against Atheism and Irreligion*. Faded as this fiery little treatise is from the minds of most of the theologians of the present, who are prone to waste their time upon such futile questions as the recognition of Anglican orders by the Pope, and in spite of its narrowness, it will repay a careful perusal to-day. It may not, it is true, convert atheists ; but he is a skilled logician who can convert inconvertible propositions, and he who can convert their proposers is more skilful still. There is a concentrated force of absolute conviction displayed in every page, which, if it fail to convince the modern reader, grips him with the sense of unusual power. Moreover, the extensive learning displayed without affectation, and to illustrate each successive point, is remarkable even in that learned age. That a scholar so young as Henry Smith should have been able, during the brief years of his life, to acquire a store of knowledge so varied and so rich speaks much for his intellectual gifts, and these are displayed lavishly in the little work under consideration. Here only a brief survey of its contents, illustrated by occasional quotations, can be attempted ; but even so its force and terseness cannot be wholly obscured by inadequate selection.

The author sets out by showing in a series of carefully-

¹ *The Art of Hearing*, pp. 319, 320.

digested arguments that "there is a God, and that He ought to be worshipped."¹ He then proceeds to prove in his own fashion that Christianity is the only true religion of the world. On this difficult task he expends much learning, and his use of the Bible in its aptness and exact application is only rivalled by that of Thomas Fuller. This method leads him to assert his main proposition, that the Bible itself is "God's arrow against atheists." Having proved his point to his own satisfaction, and with an ingenuity which deserves full credit in these days of the *Higher Criticism*, he advances to attack and overthrow the heresies of Mohammed. Herein he shows all the resources of his wide and deep scholarship, which are dimmed but not entirely overclouded by the darkening influence of prejudice. He uses every weapon, clean or unclean, which comes to his hand, nor does he disdain to repeat the time-dishonoured slanders against the Prophet of Mecca. For instance, he alleges that one day Mohammed, while at dinner with his friends, "felt his wonted sickness approaching, and made haste saying he must needs depart to confer with the angel Gabriel, and go aside, lest his glorious presence should be an occasion of their deaths; forth he went, and remembering that a soft place was best for his falling-sickness, down he fell on a dunghill."² Here swine attacked him and would have trampled him to death, but for the chance care of his wife, who saw and saved him. This, with similar stories of the great prophet's life, is told with a solemn waggishness and a mischievous delight, so that the reader's respect begins insensibly to wane, as he peruses similar pieces of malicious gossip concerning the founder of Islam. Henry Smith had a keen perception of the power of ridicule to enforce a slanderous argument whose improbability he failed to see, and he strove with some success to heap ridicule upon the revelation ostensibly contained in the Koran.

Having thus, in his view, effectually disposed of Mohammed, he proceeds with scarcely less ferocity to attack the pretensions of the Church of Rome. Tearing into tatters the garments of its ornate ceremonies, he proceeds to prove the erring character of Romanism, while he pours scathing contempt on the Papal claim of infallibility. In this part of his work his native Puritanism breaks out, and he denounces certain ceremonies prevalent in the

¹ *God's Arrow, etc.*, chap. i. p. 1.

² *Idem*, chap. iv. p. 45.

English Church of his time as idolatrous imitations of the "Scarlet Woman." He next proceeds to put out the paler fires of Purgatory with a mighty stream of quotations from the Christian Fathers, which, though sufficiently warm with the heat of denunciatory language, is yet capable of deluging the fiery foundations of the Papistical doctrine. Then the Pope is unfrocked, and St. Peter's chair rudely overthrown, and wholesale condemnation justly dealt out to indulgences, traditions, images, justification by works, and what not. Finally, and as a matter of course, he proves the unhappy Pope to be Antichrist, the beast, and sundry other disagreeable creatures. This chapter of the work is copious and learned, filled with humour and overflowing with eloquence : and yet Mohammedanism still flourishes, while the Papal tiara is comparatively firm on the brow of its successive wearers. Lastly, Puritan as he was at heart, he attacks the tendency of Puritanism to split up into barely distinguishable sections. This is the shortest and certainly not by any means the most powerful chapter in the book ; but it does little to weaken the effect of a weighty, learned, and unusually forcible treatise. In its own day it was highly valued ; but to-day the horizon of thought has shifted, and the little tract is only to be found in a rare volume, or in casual reprints.

As a controversialist, as has already been said, Henry Smith was a doughty and a dangerous opponent ; his learning was great and his resources were numerous. His exact knowledge and apposite use of the Bible were the wonder and terror of his more feebly equipped adversaries, who in this respect could not touch him. His language was singularly clear, unaffected, and copious, and he disdained no illustration, however homely, if only it served to point a truth or to sharpen an argument. His shrewd English common-sense led him to scorn the tricks and impostures of the vision-mongers of his day, nor would he accept the report of so-called supernatural revelations without severely testing the evidence of any such manifestation. A pungent sharpness of humour flavours all his utterances, which may have occasionally provoked a smile amongst his hearers, but which must have made his pithy sayings long remembered. He feared no man, but spoke out his message with the single-hearted sincerity of one who thought much and felt deeply. John Calvin exercised supreme weight in his theology, though he adhered

to the form of Church government under which he was reared. Still, he never took Orders, because in so doing he would have been constrained to do violence to his conscience in some minor points in doctrine or discipline; so his example remains, of a strong, true man, who sacrificed much for conscience' sake.

He was little more than thirty when he died from the blighting power of consumption, or by the fiery breath of some of those fevers which were so prevalent in his day. Possibly the intensity of his preaching was due in part to the shortness of his life and the nature of his disease. Some of his later sermons, such as the two discourses on the *Song of Simeon*, are marked by that clearer perception of eternal verities, which is one of the most touching indications of the consciousness of the speedy approach of death. The air of quiet peace which pervades them is infinitely restful to the reader, and the preacher seems to speak from foregleams of immortality, which shone before his fading eyes. Throughout his life he was a man of rigid orthodoxy, as far as his theology is concerned, nor was he over-tender to the feelings of his opponents, whom he denounced with pitiless force. But, in spite of his sternness in what he held of most importance, his sermons abound in evidences of kindly pity for those to whom he was preaching, though he never spared their faults. His startling eloquence was such that he well deserved the name of the silver-tongued Smith, which the admiration of his contemporaries fastened upon him. He attracted great crowds by his magical speech and his un-failing wit, and he had the capability of stirring every kind of emotion in the breasts of his hearers. What he had to say—and it was always worth saying—he said with a directness as innocent of fear as it was clear of sight and firm of purpose; and we can easily imagine with what mingled delight and terror he was heard, in those early days, when Protestantism was slowly winning its way to the hearts of the English people. A Puritan he lived, and a Puritan he died; yet all evidence of his private life speaks of a sweetness and a tenderness, which did not by any means characterise the Puritanism of that generation.

As we read the time-worn volume, which contains his written and his spoken record, we can almost see the thin figure of the preacher with his massive brow and earnest eyes. The silver tones of his voice ring in our ears with

a solemn and awakening cadence, and we hear, not unmoved, words which apply as exactly to ourselves as to those who sobbed and trembled as they heard. A man of substance, who gave himself freely to self-sacrificing work, we cannot but admire his spirit of consecration and the power of his sincerity. He has long left the earth; but the volume which was published sixty-six years after his death remains overflowing with vigorous life. It is possessed of the merits and of some few of the defects of its day, for its author was a preacher and not a prophet. Parts are no doubt dry as the dust which covers them; while parts are faded as the yellowing paper upon which they are printed. But time has not been able to destroy it utterly; the man remains in his works living and real, as when he once trod the earth. There is a nervous power and a vital earnestness about him, which command our respectful admiration, an underlying tenderness, which arouses our sympathetic affection. His fiery zeal, his flashing humour, his felicity in illustration, and his transparent simplicity of style, make up a man of a kind not too common in our generation, whether in or out of the pulpit. Hence it can but be beneficial to us to pay him the meed of kindly appreciation. A column of noble uprightness he lived, a warder of the beacon-fire of individual earnestness he died.

“Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-fire is quenched in smoke,
The trumpet’s silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill.”





LANCELOT ANDREWES.

From the Frontispiece to his "Lectures on the Moral Law" (1642).

THE BISHOP

LANCELOT ANDREWES

"See here a shadow from the setting sun,
Whose glorious course, through this horizon run,
Left the dim face of our dull hemisphere
All one great eye, all drowned in one great tear."

CRASHAW, *On the Portrait of Andrewes.*

IF the parson in the earlier and in the later days of the Reformation succeeded to much of the power and dominating influence of his priestly predecessor, the bishop far surpassed him alike in the scope of his action and in the extent of his authority. Some of the grimmer reformers, who longed for a more thorough and sweeping reconstruction of the national Church, might and did eye him askance, as he wended his way in solemn state through the streets of London, or through the less frequented parts of his diocese. But these over-critical Christians were compelled by a high hand to keep their smouldering dissatisfaction to themselves. Whenever a petition praying for further reform in the Church was presented to Elizabeth, she was always ready with one invariable answer. She had settled the government of the Church once and for ever, and all who were discontented therewith must endure it as best they could, or be treated as stubborn rebels, who could never receive content for their too tender consciences. If they could not remain peaceably at home they might go to their beloved Geneva, or to churches similarly constructed on the Continent. Nor can the just historical critic, with any degree of fairness, censure her attitude to the Presbyterians—if they may so be called at this period—who were without any well-defined Presbytery. If the whole of the circumstances be impartially weighed, neither she nor her ministers could have pursued another course. The majority of the people was Romanist to the core, while the defenders of the reformed Church, as by law estab-

lished, were nothing more than a powerful minority. Hence any party, however learned and pious, nay, however conscientious it might be, which attempted to unsettle the system built up at the cost of great toil and much thought, appeared in the eyes of the Queen and of her councillors to be hostile to the true interests of their country. They could be neither more nor less than foolish purists, who knew not what they wanted, or of positive traitors, whose chief object was to play into the hands of the Papists and the King of Spain.

Furthermore, Elizabeth herself, with a true woman's love of pomp and pageantry in all matters pertaining to her government, was naturally attracted to a moderate episcopacy, which she believed to be alike Scriptural and reasonable. Besides, the bishops were of great use to her, both as administrators and as securities for the good behaviour of her Protestant subjects. They made progresses, or visitations, through their respective dioceses at fixed intervals with little less than royal state; they were a firm bulwark against the struggles of decaying Romanism; they narrowly inquired into the spiritual and temporal welfare of those who were committed to their charge; and there can be no doubt that in spite of occasional lapses into pure tyranny, they generally exercised their episcopal functions with becoming moderation. The theology of the reformed Church might be, as it was, largely Calvinistic; but its government and its ritual bore just so much resemblance to the older Church as was likely to conciliate the wavering affections of the mass of the nation. Nor must it be forgotten, that the Reformation meant re-formation, and not innovation; thus, in spite of the troublous interruption of the Civil War, its ultimate success was assured. It might be almost as far from the primitive model as was Romanism itself; but it was eminently adapted to the needs of its contemporaries. James the First, the wise pupil of Buchanan, who had been reared in the very heart of Presbyterianism, had by no means learned to love the stern system of his northern Church. The despotic control of the ministers, their outspoken reproofs of his royal shortcomings, the absence of pomp in worship, and the sturdy independence of the Scots, had filled him with a not unnatural dislike of the system built up and organised by John Knox. That he was a Calvinist in theology made no difference to his love

of a more elaborate ritual, which captivated his fancy and delighted his eyes and his ears. Furthermore, he had long pined to throw off the control of a government which had not merely proved extremely galling to him, but had humiliated his childish pride in his regal dignity.

When, then, he came to take possession of his southern kingdom, he soon showed himself determined to maintain the existing order of things in matters ecclesiastical. He knew that the bishops had been a strong stay and an unfailing support to his predecessor, and he made up his mind to use their assistance in the maintenance of his authority. When, then, the Hampton Court Conference was summoned on January 15, 1604, the King at once showed the bent of his sympathies; and on the second day of meeting, he uttered his celebrated aphorism of "No bishop, no king."¹ That this pithy pronouncement would chill the hearts of the supporters of Presbyterianism cannot be doubted. They would immediately perceive that they had been summoned to argue out their case before a judge who had already made up his mind, and they would recognise that their soundest arguments would be uttered in vain. The Conference, therefore, which had been called together to settle the difficulties of the Church, had only one tangible result—the translation of the Bible, which is still used in the bulk of the churches. However loudly his Puritan subjects might mutter and murmur at ceremonies, and a form of government which they regarded with some reason as Popish, James was resolved to reduce them to an unconditional submission to the ecclesiastical system, as he found it already established. He had not the slightest sympathy with the conscientious scruples of the more extreme reformers, who fondly hoped that he would remodel the English Church after the Genevan pattern. Nothing was farther from his thoughts and his intentions; an episcopacy he would have, and an episcopacy he maintained in the teeth of the widespread opposition of many of the most learned divines of the land.

The King, who loved to have learned men around him, not so much that they might instruct him as that he might show off his own learning to them, chose many of his ministers of state from the bench of bishops, who for the most part showed themselves less open to corruption

¹ Fuller, *Church History* (1655), Bk. X. p. 12.

than the laity. These august pillars of the Church had commonly keen eyes, and they soon perceived the peculiar nature of James's weaknesses. They saw his delight in flattery of the grossest kind, and some of the noblest of their order were known to stoop so low as to speak bad Latin, with the deliberate purpose of giving the royal Solomon the delicious opportunity of correcting their voluntary blunders. It is not difficult to understand the ease with which they were able to captivate a king whose childish vanity must have excited their secret contempt; nor is it wonderful that under such conditions he took intense delight in their conversation. He loved a flatterer next to his own soul; and it added a keen zest to his enjoyment of their smooth speeches to know that he was, as he thought justly, appreciated by the most learned men of his kingdom. In addition to their felicitous compliments, they early began to preach that disastrous doctrine of *Divine right*, which was the direct cause of the downfall of his ill-fated son. At first this arch-heresy was regarded as of trifling importance by the laymen who surrounded the throne, who looked upon it merely as a harmless eccentricity in which the bishops indulged to please the King and to secure their own preferment. It is true that there were occasional outbreaks of uncompromising protest, when his sacred majesty went beyond due bounds in the extravagance of his demands. But there can be no doubt that the teaching itself was esteemed to be of trivial moment by statesmen, who knew how carefully the royal prerogative was limited in such a country as England. Thus it came to pass that, both from their real merits and the high degree of royal favour which they had secured for themselves, the bishops rose to a position of almost supreme influence in the counsels of the nation.

That in the main they fully deserved the estimation in which they were held by all but the Puritans and the Papists, and exercised their great power with considerable discretion, may be seen from the histories of the time. Despite the severity of the Court of High Commission, they were in the main prudent and tolerant in their dioceses, and many a devout Puritan preacher was left to himself, to utter his thoughts with a large degree of liberty. There were, as was only to be expected, black sheep in the episcopal fold, as well as some sheep of a piebald nature like the politic John Williams. But black

sheep, though not in overwhelmingly large numbers, perhaps, are to be found in other pastures than those of Mother Church. Whatever may be the case with the bench of bishops as a whole, some were an honour to their Church and to their country. Leading unblemished lives in the midst of the prevailing moral degradation of the Court, they were miracles of learning and men of stainless purity. They exercised a strong and wholesome restraint upon the disgusting licentiousness of the courtiers, and, as Thomas Fuller says of his good parson, they "lived sermons." Occasionally they might follow the fashion of the world, and overlook the sins of the mighty. They might tolerate the grossness of a Carr, or the license of a Buckingham, but they never shrank from publicly denouncing the sins committed, and that in the presence of the sinner and his fellows. Some of them even ventured to point the arrows of rebuke against the King himself. More than one preached in his presence against the folly of the Spanish match, while two had the courage to vote against the divorce of the infamous Countess of Essex, though they knew that it was dear to James's heart. In fact, though they made many mistakes, it must be remembered that they were fallible men, who, in spite of their errors, did much for the welfare of their country.

Amongst the number of noble-minded bishops, none holds a higher place than Lancelot Andrewes, who was a preacher, a scholar, and a saint, and who deserves a place in the calendar far more truly than many of the shadowy inanities who have found their way thither. A descendant of a family of distinction in Suffolk, he was born in 1555, in the parish of All Hallows, Barking, in London.¹ His father, whose dwelling was at that time in Lower Street, was a merchant and seaman of no mean repute in those days of famous mariners, and he was made master of the great Naval Corporation of Trinity House.² The perfect gentility of his ancient descent was at all times a marked characteristic of the younger Andrewes, which displayed itself nowhere more con-

¹ *Abel Redivivus* (1650), which was edited, and in part compiled by, Fuller. The life of Andrewes is by Wm. Isaacson. P. 441 (the pagination of the whole of this life is omitted, hence it is here calculated from 440).

² Fuller, *Worthies*, sub "London," p. 206 (1662).

spicuously than in his later treatment of the Puritans, when they became amenable to his discipline. The boy, whose talents were of unusual brilliance, was first sent to the Coopers' Free School, in Ratcliffe, in London. Dr. Ward, his first master, has the great credit of having discerned peculiar ability in the boy, and of having saved him from apprenticeship to his father's trade.¹ From this school Andrewes was soon removed to the Merchant Taylors' School, which was at that time under the wise supervision of the sufficiently well-known and sympathetic scholar, Richard Mulcaster. For this his second school-master he entertained a profound reverence, and he displayed his grateful remembrance of his school-days by hanging Mulcaster's portrait always over his study door.² Under such tuition, "by his extraordinary industry and admirable capacity, he soon outstript the scholars under Master Mulcaster's care, being become an excellent Grecian and Hebraician, insomuch as Thomas Watts, Doctor of Divinity, Prebend and Residentiary of St. Paul's and Archdeacon of Middlesex (who had newly founded some scholarships in Pembroke Hall in Cambridge), sent him thither, and bestowed the first of his said scholarships upon him, which places are (since) called the Greek Scholarships."³ With such provision obtained by his own merits, and by the wise liberality of his father, the young Andrewes made marked progress at Cambridge in all branches of learning. He never confined himself to the necessary branches of study, but assimilated in his capable mind every kind of profitable knowledge.

History and tradition have preserved but few traces of his early life; the age in which he lived was not an age of biography in the later sense of the word, and the modern student is compelled to glean what scattered ears he can from a somewhat ample field, which has been too thinly sown. Some habits, however, survive in what are called his memoirs, which serve to show how true a student he was in the best sense of the word. From the beginning of his boyhood he rose at four in the morning

¹ "He promoted Dr. Ward to the parsonage of Waltham, and ever loved and honoured his master, Mulcaster, during his life, and was a continual helper to him, and his son Peter Mulcaster, to whom he gave a legacy of twenty pound by his will."—*Funeral Sermon on Bishop Andrewes* (*Collected Sermons*), p. 791.

² Aubrey, *Lives* (1813), Vol. II. p. 204.

³ *Abel Redivivus* (1650), p. 441.

to study, a practice by no means common amongst ordinary boys, while he continued his work until late into the night, reading by the light of a single candle. So little did he care for the usual sports of his comrades, that his master, with a thoughtful prudence not too common at that period, was compelled to drive him forth to play, in order that his health might not succumb to his neglect of recreation.¹ Sutton, the Dorsetshire scholar, says that Andrewes was "a great long boy of eighteen years old at least before he went to the University."² This statement would seem to be an exaggeration, but it points nevertheless to the fact that the youth was sent to College at an unusually late age for the sixteenth century, when boys were not uncommonly entered at either Oxford or Cambridge in their thirteenth year.³ During his University life he is said to have told some of his friends that he took but small interest in those pursuits and exercises which occupied so much of the time and zeal of his fellow-students. Neither dice nor cards nor chess had any fascination for his studious spirit in his study, nor did he take any part in archery, quoits, bowls, nor even in such thrilling and exciting pastimes as bear-baiting in his leisure hours. Indeed, so close a student left himself but scanty leisure, though his work must often have been interrupted by the less studious rioting of his chamber fellows. His only recreation at College appears to have been a walk in solitude, or in the company of a carefully chosen friend, with whom he loved "to confer, and to recount their studies."⁴

But his lonely walks were peopled by the sweet companionship of holy and peaceful thoughts, and like others of his retiring disposition he was never alone. His observation of natural objects, such as "the grass, herbs, corn, trees, cattle, earth, waters, heavens, and any of the creatures," was keen and discriminating; and had he not devoted himself to the study of ancient learning, he might have made a distinguished man of science. He rejoiced with all the fervent passion of a devout and imaginative soul in the contemplation of the "natures, orders, qualities, virtues and uses" of the creatures and phenomena of the countryside, and this was a pursuit, which "was ever

¹ *Funeral Sermon*, p. 791. ² Aubrey, *Lives* (1813), Vol. II. p. 204.

³ *Anonymous Life of Thomas Fuller* (1661), p. 3.

⁴ *Abel Redivivus*, pp. 442, 443.

to him the greatest mirth, content and recreation that could be." His practice of close and exact observation he maintained with ever-increasing delight to the end of his life, and but little escaped his scrutinising gaze. Along the old road to Ely he would see the cowslips and long purples blowing side by side in the springtide meadows; nay, he may even have pursued his course till the grey old towers of the venerable cathedral broke upon his view. The path by the river to Grantchester may have been trodden by his solitary footsteps, which has been paced by thousands since, and he may have smiled to himself over the *Reeve's Tale*, as he passed its scene at the old mill of Trumpington. But whether he pursued his lonely path, or enjoyed the sympathetic converse of a congenial friend, he was slowly but surely fitting himself for the high place which he was destined to hold alike in his beloved Church and amongst the theologians and saints of his land. He could draw inspiration from solitude, as well as from books, and as he wandered by himself his mind was busied in turning over the problems of theology and in observing every object around him.

It must never be imagined, however, that the temper of Andrewes was in the slightest degree morose and uncompanionable because he loved retirement. In society he was at all times a cheerful, witty, and brilliant conversationalist, who formed the delight of any circle in which he found himself. It was the depth of his devotion which sent him forth from the noise and bustle of men to find his greatest earthly happiness in quiet communion with God. By his patient application and his wonderful talents he quickly outdistanced his college companions, and shortly after he had taken his Bachelor's degree in the year 1575, he was chosen at the beginning of 1576 Fellow of his College against so distinguished a competitor as his life-long friend, Thomas Dove. That his ability must have been conspicuous is clearly shown on this occasion, for in 1600 Dove was chosen Bishop of Peterborough.¹ As early as the year 1570 a devout Welshman, Hugh Price, founded Jesus College in Oxford,² and attracted by the fame of Andrewes, he made him one of his first Fellows on the foundation on the 11th of July, 1581. Wood,³ who is the

¹ Fuller, *Worthies* (London), p. 207.

² Fuller, *Church History* (1655), Bk. IX. p. 96.

³ Wood (Bliss), *Fasti Oxonienses*, Vol. I. col. 122.

authority for this date, calls these fellowships *Honorary or Titular Scholarships*, a circumstance which seems to indicate that Andrewes did not derive any pecuniary benefit from his new dignity. Nay, it is even doubtful whether he discharged any of the possible functions connected with it. But he was the last man to care for money, except as a means for beneficence; and his habits of life were of the simplest kind. Despite his great learning and his growing reputation, he was so lowly-minded, that he was wont to perform his journeys between London and Cambridge until the year 1585, in which he took his first degree in Divinity. Furthermore he would doubtless have continued the healthful and invigorating practice, had not some malicious critics attributed his humility to avaricious parsimony. There are some envious persons in the world who cannot see anything as it is; and it was from critics of this kind that the young scholar suffered more than once in his long and useful life.¹

Hard and unremittingly as Andrewes worked at College, he never abated, though he slightly varied his studies through such time as he allowed himself for vacation. During the years which he spent at Cambridge up to and probably for some time after his father's death, he was accustomed to pass four weeks out of every year in London with his family. The time which he selected for this purpose was the two weeks before and the two following Easter. Before each of these annual visits he would write to his father, requesting him to engage for his benefit a teacher in some art, science, or language which he did not already know: "so that within a few years he had laid the foundations of all arts and sciences, and had gotten skill in most of the modern languages."² Such incessant work played havoc with a constitution which, though wiry, was never at any time of the strongest. But in spite of ill-health he toiled on in his own way, until he became the pride of Cambridge scholarship, and perhaps the most learned man of his day. When he had taken his Master's degree in 1578, his studies in Divinity had gained him so great a reputation that he was chosen catechist; and the lectures, which he delivered in this capacity on Saturdays and Sundays at three o'clock in the afternoon during term time, were crowded with an eager throng of attentive listeners. The whole of the University

¹ *Abel Redivivus*, p. 442.

² *Ibid.*

sent students to learn from his wisdom, and probably no other man, save indeed Thomas Cartwright, ever had hearers so numerous and so enthusiastic. He took the *Ten Commandments* for his theme, and he handled his subject with a dialectic skill and a moral force quite unusual even in that day of great and accomplished scholars. His keen and searching wit enabled him to probe the hearts of those who heard him, and though his lectures do not appear to have survived in exactly their original dress, when they were published in 1642, some years after his death, they became at once and deservedly popular. They are learned, weighty, and witty, rich in spiritual and moral power, copious and epigrammatic in style, and full of striking and varied thoughts.

It was during this period of his life that he attained his wonderful skill in casuistry, of which he became so complete a master that few disputants could hold their own against him, much less reduce him to silence.¹ A quaint story is told of his Cambridge life, which must have occurred at or near this time rather than at the time when he was made Master of his old college. At Cambridge there was "a good fat alderman," who had a reprehensible but incontrollable habit of going to sleep in church after dinner during the sermon. Such a public breach of good manners provoked the vanity of the various preachers, who set down the slumberer's drowsiness as a "mark of reprobation." This terrible judgment filled the sleepy citizen with great alarm, as he fully believed in its possible, if not in its probable truth. In a melancholy frame of mind he came to Andrewes to resolve him in point of conscience. Andrewes, looking pitifully at him, set down the fault to "an ill habit of body," not to deliberate evil intention. With great wisdom he advised his spiritual patient to eat a less hearty meal at dinner, and to make up for lost time at supper. But the advice, though faithfully followed, did not produce the desired result; and once more the luckless alderman came tearfully to his spiritual adviser for comfort and counsel. Andrewes then recommended him to follow his usual habit of dining heartily, and to take a long nap after his dinner was done. The alderman thankfully followed this congenial counsel, and next Sunday, having quite slept off the drowsy effects of his dinner, he made his appearance

¹ *Funeral Sermon*, p. 791.

as usual in Great St. Mary's, "where the preacher was prepared with a sermon to damn all who slept at sermon, as a certain sign of *reprobation*. The good alderman, having taken his full nap before, looks on the preacher all sermon time, and spoiled the design." The wise and sympathetic advice of Andrewes to this sinful sleeper, when it leaked out, raised a ferment of denunciation about his head, "but he had learning and wit enough to defend himself."¹

The severer reformers in Cambridge now became most anxious to win so learned a man to their way of thinking, knowing full well that if he were their champion, he would be able to strike terror into the hearts of all of their adversaries. Emmanuel College was the headquarters of Cambridge Puritanism, and its governors vainly strove to cajole or capture the great scholar. The sabbatarian rigidity of this grave party was in itself repulsive to a cheerful yet devout man like Andrewes, and University gossip tells a story, which may or may not be true, but which strikingly enforces the revolt of the natural man against excessive sanctity of professions and strictness of sabbatarian rigidity. Even men of the stiffer sort were seen to be capable of taking in private the very recreations which they publicly denounced as sinful. "They preached," says Aubrey, "very strict keeping and observing the Lord's day, and made upon the matter damnation to break it, and that 'twas less in sin to kill a man. Yet these hypocrites did bowl in a private garden at another College every Sunday after sermon, and one of the College (a loving friend to Mr. L. Andrewes), to satisfy him, one day lent him the key of a private back-door for the bowling-green on a Sunday evening, which, he opening, discovered these zealous preachers, with their gowns off, at earnest play. But they were strangely surprised to see the entry of one that was not of the brotherhood."² Whether this story have any foundation or not in actual fact—and there is no reason why it should not be true—there can be little doubt that Andrewes, whose humility was deep and whose piety was sincere, would be repelled by the assertive and self-conscious rigidity of the Cambridge Puritans. If he did really catch them tripping, as is said, he would not unnaturally be alienated finally from

¹ Aubrey, *Lives* (1813), Vol. II. pp. 205, 206.

² *Idem*, pp. 204, 205.

any sympathy with their professions of purity. Furthermore, the devotional nature of the man required something more artistic and quickening than the total absence of ceremonies, in which the sterner reformers found their greatest delight. He recognised, what many have failed to perceive, the subduing power of beauty and order to deepen the springs of the spiritual life.

The quiet scholar, then, from these or other reasons, remained opposed alike to Puritan lack of ceremonial and to persecution of Puritans on this account. But his tranquil life at the University was interrupted by an invitation which he received from Henry, Earl of Huntingdon, at that time just appointed President of the North, to accompany him to his province. The invitation was couched in such terms that it could not well be declined, and Andrewes distinguished himself in his new capacity both by his skill in preaching and by the keenness of his argumentative powers in private conferences. He is said to have been able to convert many recusants, including several priests, from their allegiance to Rome. The reputation of his subtle dialectical skill brought him under the notice of Secretary Walsingham, who, with the intention of making him "Reader of Controversies in Cambridge," gave him for his maintenance the parsonage of Alton, in Hampshire. When his great patron died, Andrewes, with characteristic generosity, restored this living to the bereaved widow. The wary secretary, who understood men with singular acuteness, further presented him to the living of St. Giles's, in Cripplegate, along with a residentiary Prebend in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1588. Thus Andrewes was withdrawn from the quiet that he loved to the prominent position of a London clergyman. His fame had preceded him, and he was welcomed by a large and enthusiastic congregation when he entered upon his duties. Next year he took his Doctor's degree in Divinity, received the Prebend of the Collegiate Church in Southwell, and the same year he was chosen Master of his old College in Cambridge. He thus obtained in addition to his own means ample provision for his needs, so that he was able to devote himself to persistent study and hours of silent prayer, which did not however prevent him from paying the fullest attention to his varied duties.¹

The preaching of Andrewes, though not of the kind

¹ *Funeral Sermon*, p. 791.

which attracts the jaded palate of the present age, nor within the compass of our generally less learned divines, proved irresistible to the citizens of London. Blending, as he did, a glittering wit and a graceful humour with an unusually effective skill in word-plays, he was able to set off his profound learning and subtle argumentation in a style which deeply impressed his hearers with a reverent sense of his capacity and of his sincere earnestness. It may be that there is some truth in the shrewd criticism of a Scottish lord, which he made when James asked him his opinion of one of Andrewes's sermons. The preacher, he admitted, was learned, "but he did play with his text as a jackanapes does, who takes up a thing and plays a little with it—Here's a pretty thing, and there's a pretty thing."¹ But in spite of this undoubted defect, the sermons of the great preacher may be read to-day with genuine delight and unaffected admiration. The Prebend at St. Paul's, which he held, had been established with the set purpose of promoting penitence, and with his wonted perception of things, and their proper relation one to another, the worthy Prebendary was to be found at stated seasons in the cathedral, ready to give advice and help to such as had the grace to consult him. This practice, which offended some of his clerical brethren, was in no way based upon the compulsory cleansing of the Roman Confessional, with which its author had not a shred of sympathy. His real object was to help those who sought him of their free will, whom he did not profess to absolve in the Romanist sense, but to lead into the paths of contrition and amendment. In addition to these manifold occupations he lectured three times a week in the cathedral during term-time, his discourses having a special relation to the topic of penitence.

Under the continuous strain of labours so various and so exhausting his constitution at length gave way, and he grew so feeble that his friends entertained reasonable fears of his life. His appointment, therefore, to the Mastership of Pembroke Hall came as a godsend to the worn-out preacher, who was pining for greater quiet to renew his jaded health and to pursue his studies. His predecessor was that William Fulke,² who, when Thomas

¹ Aubrey, *Lives*, Vol. II. p. 207.

² Fuller, *Worthies* (London) (1662), p. 219. Chalmers, *Biographical Dictionary*, Vol. VIII. p. 327.

Cartwright was considered not sufficiently orthodox, was appointed to confute the errors of the Rhemish Version of the New Testament, a task which he achieved with more or less indifferent success. Andrewes entered upon his new and congenial duties in 1589, and in the unvexed realm of academic seclusion he was able to recover his lost vigour and to recruit his failing health. But he was by no means idle in his new post; indeed, it was not in the nature of the man to be idle. Nay, so great was his devotion to the interests of his College, that he was left considerably the poorer for his preferment at the end of the six years during which he diligently devoted himself to its best interests. Fuller, who loved the man with his whole heart, remarks that "he was not indebted to this house, to which he gave (besides plate, three hundred folio books, etc.) one thousand pounds for two fellowships."¹ These fellowships, in grateful remembrance of his first scholastic distinction, he gave to the holders of Dr. Watts's Greek Scholarships; thus he benefited his College, and at the same time he commemorated his indebtedness to one of the earliest of its benefactors.

But, though he found himself the busy Master of an embarrassed College, he never neglected his London duties; and he continued to preach upon occasion in the metropolis, though not so frequently as his numerous admirers could have desired. Here his profound scholarship, and his skilful method in its application, had caught the nice ear of Elizabeth, whose critical instinct and considerable learning were captivated by the great divine. In 1586 she made him one of her twelve chaplains in ordinary, though he does not appear to have preached before her in this capacity for several years. Henceforth, his preferment was steady and continuous, and it might have been more rapid, had he not from conscientious scruples declined the offer of more than one bishopric. In 1597, he succeeded to a Prebend at Westminster, and four years afterwards he was invested with the then vacant Deanery of the same place. By this time he had attained to the prime of his manhood, at the age of forty-five; his accomplishments were as numerous as they were varied, and his linguistic skill was so great, that in addition to the learned languages of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, he was thoroughly conversant with at

¹ Fuller, *History of Cambridge* (1655), p. 42.

least fifteen modern tongues.¹ Endowed with a vast and retentive memory, he was able to store his mind with all the theological learning of his age and of preceding ages, while he acquired many arts and sciences, which he seems to have looked upon as little more than recreations in the midst of more serious studies. But his almost unlimited stores of knowledge made him not a whit less modest than he had shown himself to be, both in private and in public.

Andrewes did not confine himself merely to the advancement of his own learning, but, by his helpful kindness and practical encouragement, he was able to serve at the hour of their greatest need men so distinguished as Isaac Casaubon, Voss, and Grotius, who were numbered amongst his friends and grateful admirers. Though his native shyness made him to a certain extent difficult to approach, those who found their way into the shrine of his intimacy took much delight in his cheery and supremely witty companionship. When he did unbend, his ordinarily grave face lighted up with a smile of happy kindness, and his pure-hearted simplicity lent a quiet courtesy to his manner, which could have sprung from no other source. But shy and retiring as he was by nature, he was none the less a keen and penetrating reader of the characters of the men about him. Those whom he preferred in his latter life justified his selection and did credit to their preferment. He could see through the shallow disguises with which would-be saints shrouded their real hypocrisy, and he recoiled with all the force of a sensitive soul from such mean pretensions. His servants almost worshipped the silent yet considerate hermit who was their master, and both in his life and after his death he was honoured with a deep and grateful affection. In fact, from whatever point of view he may be regarded, he shines conspicuous as one of those profound scholars and keen-witted, yet supremely humble-minded men, who are the glory of the national Church.

When Elizabeth passed away in 1603, in a stormy sunset of trouble and conspiracy, as Dean of Westminster Andrewes had the arduous duty of preaching her funeral sermon. The beauty of his discourse gains additional grace from his deep and mournful admiration of the great Queen, who had outlived her glory, but who had

¹ *Funeral Sermon*, p. 792.

done her duty bravely to her sorrowing people. So when the northern Solomon; who certainly imitated his predecessor in Israel in the glory of his apparel, if not in the majesty of his carriage, came to the throne in the same year, he cast a reverent eye upon the distinguished Dean. In his presence the vanity of the royal scholar was hushed, and the ribaldry of his tongue commonly sank into silence. In spite of his follies, James had the true scholar's veneration for real learning, and even he acknowledged—if not in words, at least in respect—that he had found a more learned man than himself. Andrewes assisted at the coronation solemnities, which were celebrated on July 25th, 1603; and, if Laud may be trusted, it was he who took the principal part in drawing up the form of Service which was used upon that august occasion.¹ The same Service was used twenty-five years later to celebrate the crowning of another unwise Stuart, whose continual wrong-headedness was the immediate source of his downfall. Doubtless, Andrewes was present at this later ceremony, though even he could not forecast the grim events which were destined to follow. That James had determined to prefer him, as soon as a favourable opportunity occurred, will appear in due course. The King would have no unlearned men for the governors of his Church, and with all his pedantry he was not slow to detect a similar fault in those who paid court to him. When, then, he saw a man who had not a tinge of affectation about him, he was only too ready to use him for the good of the Church.

When, therefore, during the next year the Hampton Court Conference was assembled, Andrewes, as a matter of course, was one of those who were summoned to defend the Establishment. That he was as hopeful as the King that all the difficulties of the Puritans would vanish before subtle arguments may well be doubted. From the published reports of the discussion, it is manifest that he took little part in its course,² though he could not have sympathized with the fierce fury of John Bancroft. It was a grave misfortune that his extreme reserve or his dislike of the controversial methods employed should have prevented him from taking that part in the disputation to which his great learning justly entitled him.

¹ Laud, *History of the Troubles and Trial*, etc. (1695), pp. 320-322.

² Fuller, *Church History*, Bk. IX. pp. 6-21; Collier, *Ecclesiastical History* (1706), Vol. II. pp. 674-683.

Had he given expression to that kindly tolerance which was at the basis of his theology, there can be little doubt that his word would have had its weight. He might not have achieved any abiding result, but he might have done something to mitigate the rigours with which the Puritans were threatened. But he kept silence, when it would have been good for him to have spoken, and left the greater part of the speaking to Bancroft, who was an honest and sincere man, but who hated all rebels from the English Church with uncompromising bitterness. So the two parties separated, each, as is usual, claiming the victory, with exasperated feelings against one another, and each determined to stand by what its adherents believed to be true. When Dr. Reynold's suggestion of a new translation of the Bible was accepted, Andrewes was of course chosen as one of the translators, and the *Pentateuch*¹ fell to his share, in company with several others. In this important department of scholarship he was well qualified to win high distinction, alike from his unrivalled knowledge of the ancient languages and his nervous and vigorous style of writing his mother tongue.

On the third of November, 1605, two days before the fortunate discovery of the infamous Gunpowder Plot, Andrewes was consecrated Bishop of Chichester by Bancroft, who at that time was Archbishop of Canterbury, with the assistance of four lesser dignitaries of the Church. There can be no question that the preferment of the scholarly recluse was fully deserved and wise in itself. It is not known by what means he was induced to overcome the scruples which had kept him so long in a position inferior to his conspicuous merits; but it can hardly be doubted that he foresaw opportunities of greater usefulness and more faithful service than had yet fallen to his share. It is not, however, unreasonable to ask what sort of a bishop so retiring a man would make, whose two supreme objects were to avoid the clamorous delights of public life, and to withdraw continually into the mystic communion of private prayer. To this question there is one answer: whatever Andrewes undertook to do, he did with characteristic thoroughness and consummate ability. Hermit as in some respects he may fairly be considered, he understood men with a keen insight into their fitness for particular kinds of work, which is given to few, and

¹ Fuller, *Church History*, Bk. X. p. 45.

the majority of those whom he employed did ample justice to the wisdom of his choice. Moreover, he never allowed his private pursuits to interfere with his public duties, and his method of ruling his successive dioceses won him golden opinions from those who came into contact with him. He might, perhaps, have a tendency to be too inaccessible for a bishop, part of whose duties in that less exacting age consisted in extensive and abundant hospitality, and in frequent consultations on trivial points of ecclesiastical polity. But many of his clergy knew and loved him, while even those who only saw him at a distance had a hearty admiration for his pithy eloquence and his profound learning.

His uniform practice in giving preferment was to confer it upon "ingeniose persons that were staked to poor livings, and did *delitescere*." Such large-minded prudence and total absence of partiality were almost unknown in his day, and cannot be said to be universal in ours. Nor could he have discovered these hidden deserving men without a close acquaintance with all the livings in his diocese. His banquets were always too moderate for that immoderate period, and some dared to accuse him of parsimony on this account alone. But no charge was less deserved by any man; if he did not spend much money upon these pleasant but less profitable portions of his episcopal duties, he ministered to the wants of the necessitous with untiring liberality. He never forgot those who had served him, but took especial pains to repay the benefits which he had received with bountiful interest. At a time when men were licentious throughout the Court, in life and in language, he preserved one uniformly pure and dignified carriage, which procured him the respect of the most ribald of that ribald reign. Nay, he even exercised a wholesome check upon the wanton and foolish coarseness of such a king as James. A saint among Satyrs he moved along, neither yielding to the vices of his age, nor shrinking from publicly rebuking them, and that in the royal presence itself. But his simple, unpretending, and pious life, without a speck on his reputation, was the most consistent rebuke to the licentious and the vile, and wherever he came he shed his own peaceful influence for good. Such a character is at all times rare, but in the filthy Court of the first of the Stuarts who ruled over England it was more than rare, it was single.

But it may be urged with some show of reason, that, though many bishops have been sainted, a saint is rather out of place as a bishop. In answer to such an objection it must be remembered that a saint is not of necessity a fool, and that simplicity of life is not the invariable mark of a simpleton. One flaw in his character, which is perhaps rather apparent than real, is his lavish eulogy of James. Now it must never be forgotten that the kingly office represented much more to the prelate of the seventeenth century than it does to the bishop of to-day, who looks upon the sovereign as head of the Church in a very different sense from its original significance. To the men of his own time James did not seem so utterly despicable as we are sometimes tempted to fancy ; and we commit a grievous error of judgment, if we fail to appreciate their point of view at its true value. The King had some striking qualities amongst many contemptible habits and hateful faults, and he undoubtedly was a most learned man in spite of his pedantry ; so that in the eyes of the majority of the nation, and of some of the best men in the land, he seemed a much greater man than he really was. Moreover, to Andrewes the ungainly monarch only showed his best side, which was not wholly unamiable ; and the good bishop, like every other honest man, spoke as he found, without giving a too ready ear to the numerous scandals which filled the Court. Besides, eulogy was the fashion of the age, and there is no reason to doubt that Andrewes meant all that he said in the King's praise. No man in the three kingdoms was better able to appreciate at its correct value the shambling Solomon's vast but disorderly learning, and the bishop spoke what he felt ; in somewhat inflated language, it may be, but with sincerity and conviction. That his commendation was particularly welcome to James is certain ; for the King was an acute judge of learning, and to be praised by such a man was praise indeed.

In spite of his instinctive dislike of the bald worship of the Puritans, Andrewes had one episcopal virtue, which was little understood and less appreciated by his brethren of the bench. So long as the extreme reformers were not noisily obtrusive, he was wise enough to leave them in peace. He saw that for the most part they were men of rootless lives ; he realised that their objections to ritual were not the offspring of mere contrariety ; and he plainly

perceived that persecution was the worst means to use in any sound endeavour to wean men from what he might consider a noxious heresy. It would have been well for Laud, and for the Church itself, had he been prudent enough to show himself equally tolerant. When Pierre du Moulin wrote to the bishop a plaintive letter—the second of three upon the same subject—from Paris, complaining that King James had consigned him with all the French Protestants to hell for not believing in the divine right of episcopacy, the answer of Andrewes contains the characteristic sentence which is here translated from the Latin. “Nor, in spite of the fact that our government is by divine right, does it therefore follow that either without it there is no salvation, or no Church can stand. He must needs be blind, who cannot see Churches standing without it; he must needs be of iron, who would deny them salvation. We are not made of that iron.”¹ Whether the bishop would have uttered so profound a truth to an English Puritan at home may or may not be doubted; but this he did, he left him as far as he could to pursue his way in quiet, if he could only restrain the strength of his language. It was a grave misfortune to the land that there were not more bishops of his pattern—and Presbyterians too for the matter of that—to show forth a strong example of Christian tolerance. Fuller, whose own genial charity made him an excellent judge in such matters, has left a striking testimony to the merit of one with whose theology he was by no means in complete harmony. Speaking of certain ceremonies which Andrewes introduced into his chapel, the Church historian says, “But this I dare affirm, that wheresoever he was a parson, dean, or bishop, he never troubled parish, college, or diocese with pressing other ceremonies upon them than such which he found used before his coming thither. And it had not been amiss, if such who would be accounted his friends and admirers had followed him in the footsteps of his moderation, content with the *enjoying*, without the *enjoining* their private practices and opinions upon others.”²

¹ Andrewes, *Responsiones ad Petri Molinæi Epistolas, etc.* (1629), p. 176. Du Moulin's second letter is dated Nov. 15, 1618, and Andrewes's reply Dec. 4, 1618. “*Nec tamen si nostra divini juris sit, inde sequitur, vel quod sine ea salus non sit, vel quod stare non possit Ecclesia. Cæcus sit, qui non videat stantes sine ea Ecclesias; ferreus sit, qui salutem eis neget. Nos non sumus illi ferrei.*”

² *Church History* (1655), Bk. XI. p. 127.

That such was Fuller's own habit can as little be doubted as that the passage just quoted alludes to Laud and his school, who professed to follow Andrewes in their theology, but who were far from imitating his wise moderation. That he should have pursued so temperate and tolerant a course, at a time when toleration stank in the nostrils of every sect in the land as the sulphurous breath of the bottomless pit, is not one of the least of the bishop's virtues. Persecution he would never sanction, and he held it to be the seed of heresy rather than the fruit of ecclesiastical wisdom. Such a line of conduct in the gentle and large-hearted scholar can only excite wonder, when we consider how firmly he was convinced of the truth, no less than of the beauty of the more elaborate ritual, which was celebrated in his private chapel. In a remarkable sermon on the *Worship of Imaginations*, preached January 9, 1592, at St. Giles's, Cripplegate, he plainly sets forth his own position. Speaking of the growing hatred of all ceremonial amongst the more extreme Puritans, he says: "I take it to be a fancy to imagine there needs be none (ceremonies); for without them neither comeliness, nor orderly uniformity will be in the Church!" But even here he protests as firmly against the attempt to enforce such ceremonies by persecution, though he holds those who will not acquiesce in the ritual of their national Church to be men "that trouble the Church; as those do, who, for setting light by the *customs* and *orders* of the Church, are by St. Paul concluded within the number of *persons contentious* and *troublesome*." ¹

In like manner, and with the same strength of argument, he proceeds to prove to his own satisfaction, and doubtless to that of many of his hearers, that episcopacy was the original form of Church government in the days of primitive Christianity, in which he appears to be not quite successful in his sense of the word.² Finally, in the same sermon, he inveys with grave dislike and searching ridicule against the Puritan practice of long extemporaneous prayers. His own orderly mind was repelled by the repetitions and loose language of such prayers, and he pointed out with no small force the danger on the part of the preacher of confounding vanity with inspiration, and the equally serious danger on the part of the hearers of

¹ *Collected Sermons*, p. 699.

² *Idem*, pp. 700, 701.

taking loud clamour for the manifestation of the Spirit.¹ The worship of this method of prayer was, in his view, the worship of a vain imagination. Such controversial pronouncements are rare in his published sermons, and there is reason to believe that they were as rarely made. His consistent aim was to dilate upon the essential elements of Christianity, and to leave the non-essentials to take care of themselves. He strove to persuade rather than to compel men to think with him on these matters of less importance to salvation, though to him they were helps to devotion. Nor is there any inconsistency herein between his practice and his preaching; he proclaimed from the pulpit what to him was true, and while he insisted upon the acceptance of certain doctrines, he urged the advisability of the observation of certain ceremonies. Yet the whole of the sermon just mentioned clearly shows his mental attitude to the Puritans of his day; he respected their sincerity, but he felt that they were worshipping mere imaginations in some directions, and he strove earnestly to wean them from what he felt to be their foolish errors.

Thus it will be seen that Andrewes as bishop proved himself to be the same wise, tender, considerate, and devout soul, as he had always been in a less exalted station of life. He took his learning with him to adorn the episcopal bench, while scarcely one of his contemporaries was his equal in pulpit eloquence. But in addition to these qualifications for his high office, he was endowed with another talent, from which he won great distinction. He was a controversialist of the first order, who, if he sometimes failed in convincing, never failed to convict his opponents of their error. The Gunpowder Plot was discovered two days after his elevation to the see of Chichester, and on no less than ten occasions he had the pleasant task of preaching before the King upon that fruitful theme, when its anniversary came round. Immediately after the discovery of this villainous conspiracy a new oath of allegiance was enforced upon all the adult population of the country, which the Romanists took readily enough, so long as they were left to themselves by their spiritual head. Such compliance was extremely distasteful to the Pope, who hurled threats and thunder at them in two Briefs, which he sent into

¹ *Collected Sermons*, p. 702.

England. Such a monstrous interference on the part of a foreign potentate could hardly fail to provoke James's righteous indignation; his beloved prerogative was at stake, and he replied with considerable learning and little less tartness to the commands of the Holy Father. The King's answer drew down upon his devoted head a no less tart and infinitely more scurrilous reply from Cardinal Bellarmine, who, like more than one of his fellows, wrote under the pseudonym of Matthæus Tortus. Doubtless he wished to make his learned performance pass for the complaints of one of the injured English Romanists, in which pious endeavour he signally failed, since no one could help recognising the well-known style of the great controversialist.

James was sorely displeased by the Cardinal's violent attack, and he consulted the most learned of his bishops, with the result that Andrewes wrote a Latin reply to Bellarmine, under the chief title of the *Tortura Torti*. His Latinity, if not Ciceronian, is in the main pure, his style copious and flowing, his method of argument logical and convincing, and his wit sparkles with uncommon brilliance upon almost every page. He showed himself to be more than a match even for so doughty an opponent as Bellarmine, and the strength of his case added strength to his demonstrations. The powerful treatise, which fills four hundred quarto pages,¹ acted as a red rag to the Romanist bull, and the Cardinal wrote a fierce reply, in which his Latinity had rather their regular impetuosity of Tertullian than the orderly invective of Cicero. As if he had not already sufficiently trounced his adversary, Andrewes replied in 1610 with his *Responsio ad Apologiam*, which contains more than three hundred quarto pages, and in which he enforced every argument urged in his former treatise. He was perfectly familiar with the whole range of Patristic literature, and he was able out of his own mouth to convict Bellarmine of the wonted perversions of Roman advocates, while he did not fail to give him instructions in the art of writing Latin prose.² There is no trace of any further reply on the Pope's behalf, who, according to his custom, in all probability closed the

¹ *Tortura Torti* (1609), a careful perusal of which will not only delight the reader, but will justify every one of the foregoing adjectives.

² *Responsio ad Apologiam* (1610), especially *ad lectorem*, of which the same may be said word for word.

controversy when he perceived that his champion was getting the worst of the argument. The great Cardinal cannot but have rejoiced in the Papal wisdom, as he must more than once have wished that he had refrained from provoking so strong and witty an antagonist.

The whole trend of this famous controversy, in which both sides, after the fatuous habit of such disputants, claimed the victory, will serve to show how far Andrewes was from entertaining leanings towards Rome. His tendencies were undoubtedly ritualistic, from the deep effect which ceremonial observance had in quickening his devotion ; but he was in no sense sacerdotalistic, and he can, upon no just pretension, be claimed as the ultimate originator of the modern Oxford movement, with much of which he would have been in pronounced opposition. He had an equal disbelief in the doctrine of Transubstantiation, nor does he seem to have held the veiled modern representative of the previous Roman heresy, known as the Real Presence in the Eucharist. His sermons upon this profound subject have all one bearing and one teaching ; though he acknowledged the spiritual presence of the Master with His disciples, he maintained with Saint Paul that the Eucharist was in the main a memorial celebration.¹ Laud, therefore, had no right to claim his saintly friend as the supreme English authority for his own ecclesiastical policy and belief. Let those who dissent from this view read the sermons on the question, and if they are capable of conviction, a characteristic which cannot with certainty be predicated of any Englishman, they will see that Laud, and not Andrewes, is their patron saint. It is true that there is a mysticism investing each discourse, which is not always easy to penetrate ; but through this semi-transparent veil the views of the great preacher shine with much distinctness to those who will approach the subject without any ecclesiastical prepossessions. This is not the place in which to enter upon the discussion of the merits of the question ; the modern High Anglican view of the matter may or may not be correct ; the point upon which insistence is made is simply that this doctrine was neither held nor taught by Lancelot Andrewes. It cannot be said that he maintained the Puritan simplicity of the rite, but it is equally true that he did not hold its exact opposite.

¹ *Collected Sermons*, pp. 219-248.

It was in the year 1609 that the scholarly bishop was translated to Ely, that ancient see whose noble minster towers above the banks of the sluggish Ouse. He must have visited the venerable cathedral during his life at Cambridge; nay, he may even have hoped that one day he might be appointed its bishop. And now he was invested with all the powers and privileges of the place. To his new sphere of authority he took with him the same wise principles of administration which he had pursued in his respective spheres of Church government. Nor was a prudent care less necessary in a see where the growing Puritanism of Cambridge was beginning to make itself felt more forcibly every year. But his supervision was disturbed by no serious ecclesiastical dispute, and his gentle rule was none the less firm because of its marked moderation. During the next nine years of his life there was only one event which casts a shade upon his quiet career of unremitting devotion and eminent service. When Bancroft died in 1611, to the surprise of most of the courtiers George Abbot was promoted to the vacant primacy, than whom there can be little doubt that Andrews would have made a wiser and more acceptable Archbishop. The see of Canterbury was peculiarly suited to one of his doctrinal position and his extreme moderation; but he cared little for such preferment, and his prime desire was to be left in peace to pursue his own tranquil way of life.

In the year 1613 occurred an event in which his conduct requires some explanation, though nothing but conjecture can be offered, and conjecture is merely a more or less plausible cover for ignorance. At the beginning of the reign James had married the boy Earl of Essex to the girl Lady Frances Howard, at an age when both the degroom and bride would have been better employed at school.¹ There can be little doubt that the King was influenced in this unfortunate marriage by his gratitude to both of the noble families, whom he caused to be united. When the Countess of Essex grew up to woman's estate she could not abide the Earl her husband, from a reason which may or may not be true. It is certain that, by the help of Overbury, she had formed an illicit connection with her brother, Earl of Rochester; hence the two guilty lovers,

Vide "The Archbishop," *infra*, pp. 157-202; "The Courtier," *infra*, pp. 291-340.

whose open adultery was the scandal of the Court, wished that she might be divorced, in order that they might legitimise their illegal union. Andrewes was one of the Commission appointed to try this difficult question, and he gave his decision on the side of the Countess and the King. That this was the wrong side under the circumstances can hardly be questioned. Why, then, did he take it? No certain answer can be given, but that so good a man was influenced by an unworthy motive is incredible. It is true that he was a courtier, but there is no other trace of any subjection of what was best in him to Court-favour. It seems probable that James, who cared little for the adulterous conduct of his favourite and the Countess of Essex, was genuinely anxious to repair a mistake for which he held himself to be mainly responsible; in which case he would put his view before Andrewes with all the force of one who had made up his mind, and with all the plausibility of one who was determined to convince. The bishop, as we know, rarely opened his lips at the trial, and he would appear to have been making up his mind to choose the lesser of two evils, as it showed itself in his eyes. However that may be, he did decide in favour of the divorce, and when two years later the horrible tale of Overbury's sad fate came to light he had to bear the brunt of his decision. He decided wrongly, but he decided upon what appeared to him to be sufficient grounds, and there are but few to-day who will venture to assign corrupt motives to one who stands almost alone in our history in his unaffected goodness.

Though James may have approved of the decision of Andrewes in this case, because it coincided with his own, it was not until 1618 that the bishop received further preferment, when he was translated to the see of Winchester on the death of Thomas Bilson. Here he seems to have shown himself careful beyond his wont in preferring only those who were worthy, but who had been overlooked by that glorious uncertainty which is inseparable from any known system of patronage. Aubrey has preserved two striking instances of the good bishop's insight and knowledge of men. "Amongst several others (whose names have escaped my memory)," he says in his own quaint fashion, "Nicholas Fuller, minister of Allington, near Amesbury in Wilts, was one. The bishop sent for him, and the poor man was afraid, and knew not

what hurt he had done. He makes him sit down to dinner, and, after the dessert, was brought in, in a dish, his institution and induction, or the donation of a prebend, which was his way. He chose out always able men to his chaplains, whom he advanced. Matthew Wrenn, of St. John's in Oxon, was his chaplain, a good general scholar, afterwards Dean of Windsor, from whom (by his son-in-law, Dr. W. Holder) I have taken this exact account of that excellent prelate."¹ Well might honest Aubrey, with a full conviction of their eloquence, exclaim concerning Andrewes, "His life is before his sermons." Such examples point to the keen discernment and strict justice with which the bishop made his preferments. He loved good and learned men, and he was never slack to promote such to places of importance in the Church, where they might exercise their gifts for the good of the nation.

In this blameless fashion, save on one occasion, to which brief allusion has been made, Andrewes passed his time in discharging the work of his diocese, in attending the court, and in fulfilling his episcopal duties in London. By virtue of his office he had to sit on the Court of High Commission, and we may be very sure that more than one conscientious offender against ecclesiastical discipline escaped with a slight censure by his kindly pleading. But, gentle as he was in punishment, he never hid his own convictions. Two of his speeches in the Star Chamber are preserved, in which he soundly trounces one Traske, an incorrigible Nonconformist, for "Judaical opinions," and he does not shrink from condemning a vow, or profession of a vow, made by the Countess of Shrewsbury to shelter her from the obligation of making her answer to certain serious charges against her.² It is not necessary to consider the contents of these two orations, and they are only mentioned in passing to show that the bishop neglected none of his public duties. They are touched in his wonted vigorous language, and as usual the arguments are supported by copious citations from the Bible and from the Fathers of the Church. What their effect upon the culprits might be it is not easy to decide; but it is quite certain that the judges would be edified by so great a display of learning, as well as con-

Aubrey, *Lives*, Vol. II. p. 206. Cf. Fuller, *Church History*, Bk. XI. 27.

² *Opuscula Posthuma*, 1629.

vinced by arguments so logical and so pointedly expressed. Thus Andrewes lived his faithful life, discharging each duty as it presented itself to the best of his ability, and yet finding time for long hours of silent communion.

Some time during his life he had imposed upon himself the congenial task of composing a manual of private devotions, in order that he might have always at hand the expression of his purest thoughts to cheer him in the dark hours of his spiritual humiliation. Contrary to the common practice of the time, he wrote these exquisite prayers in Greek, possibly as the most copious of the tongues in which he could adequately express the feelings of his heart. He may perhaps, too, have been influenced in his choice by the fact that the New Testament is written in Greek. William Isaacson, his secretary and biographer, had seen the original manuscript, soiled with frequent use and "stained with tears." But he did not preserve the book over which Andrewes had pored for so many silent hours. He extracted what he required for himself, and it is from his extracts that most of the posthumous copies of the *Private Devotions* have been printed. The manuscript, as it left its author's hands, with his finger-marks and stained with his tears, was found not more than five or six years ago, and an almost sacred interest gathers around its touching pages.¹ That his devotional side was the deepest part of his nature cannot be doubted. From his quiet hours of silent yet often anguished meditation he drew strength for his daily needs, and the saintly purity of his soul was the result of his spiritual wrestlings in solitary prayer. This supreme power and purity of devotional thought and expression showed itself too in his public prayers with little less intensity than in his private meditations. "His first and principal virtue," says one who knew and loved him much, "was his singular zeal and piety, which showed itself not only in his private and secret devotions between God and himself (in which they that were about him well perceived that he daily spent many hours, yea, and the greatest part of his life, in holy prayers and abundant tears, the signs whereof they often discovered), but also his exemplary public prayers with his family in his chapel; wherein he behaved himself so humbly, devoutly, and reverently,

¹ *Leaders of Religion—Bishop Andrewes* (1897), Appendix II., where the discovery of the MS. volume is well told.

that it could not but move others to follow his example."¹ These words have the ring of truth about them, and they present a touching and noble picture of the devout humility of the man.

But his private devotions never hindered but rather helped his public work, and gave a deeply religious tone to all that he said and did. From the inexhaustible store of rich experiences in solitary communion, he not only drew strength to discharge his duties to the full, but he has left behind him, amongst other public prayers and forms of service, that order which is commonly used in the consecration of a church. He was economical in the daily expenditure of his episcopal income, holding wisely that "Good husbandry is good divinity,"² by which he meant that he occupied the position of steward with reference to his revenues, which he was in duty bound to spend for the good of the Church alone. As the King's almoner he was as discreet as he was generous, and when occasion called for lavish expenditure, he was never backward to pay all that was needed. He carefully repaired each of the places in which he lived, realizing that they were the property of the Church and of the nation, and that those who followed him in his various preferments found everything in its place and in perfect order. His benefactions during his life were numerous, as also were the pious uses to which he left the bulk of his estate. In his parish of St. Giles's in Cripplegate he made an annual donation of ten pounds, to be distributed according to the needs of the poor, with several gowns. When he attended King James in his progress to either university, it was his habit to give fifty pounds, to be disbursed to the poor scholars therein. By his will he left six thousand three hundred and twenty-six pounds for pious and charitable purposes, and there is reason to believe that his private benefactions were exceptionally numerous. Every parish where he had been incumbent benefited by his former presence there; many a poor parson had cause to bless his liberality, and he was so secret in the bulk of his charities, that they are difficult to trace.³ The charge therefore of covetousness, which was lightly brought against him by those who missed the high feeding of a

¹ *Abel Redivivus*, p. 445.

² Fuller, *Church History*, Bk. XI. p. 127.

³ *Funeral Sermon*, p. 293.

too sumptuous table, has no foundation in fact, but is one of those gross calumnies which are apt to dog the steps of men who are generous to a fault, but discreet in their generosity.

Such was the man, who was the trusted friend of three sovereigns, and whose pious, unobtrusive life of constant service has shed an undying lustre on his name. His grave, reverend carriage excited the admiration of all who knew him, and when his face lighted up with a smile of kindly benevolence on such occasions as the one already recorded of Nicholas Fuller, or when he made some quiet yet sparkling jest, it was beautiful as the face of an angel. The familiar portrait, which forms the frontispiece of his *Collected Sermons*, shows only one side of his character; his gravity and his reflective look are well expressed, but the twinkle of genial mirth is almost wholly absent. But no picture of Andrewes, whether by pen or pencil, which omits so essential a part of his being, can in any sense be considered to do him justice. Pious he was before all else; but his piety was utterly free from that Pharisaical sourness, which characterized so much of the Puritanism of his day. The worthy bishop dearly loved an innocent jest, and the neatness of his replies to difficult questions is justly celebrated. One illustration of this enviable capacity has been preserved by the biographer of Waller,¹ and it will suffice to show the discretion of his wit. Once when Andrewes and Neile, the wily Bishop of Durham, were in the royal presence, "His Majesty asked the bishops, My Lords, cannot I take my subjects' money without all this formality of Parliament? The Bishop of Durham readily answered, God forbid, sir, but you should, you are the breath of our nostrils. Whereupon the King turned and said to the Bishop of Winchester, Well, my lord, what say you? Sir, replied the bishop, I have no skill to judge of Parliamentary cases. The King answered, No put-offs, my lord; answer me presently. Then, sir, said he, I think it lawful for you to take my brother Neile's money, for he offers it." The neatness of this answer to a difficult question none will dispute; even James himself was impressed, and he showed his sense of the wit of Andrewes by one of his coarse allusions, which need not be repeated here.

This keenness of wit and kindly sense of humour made

¹ Waller, *Poems*, Ed. ix. *Anonymous Life*, pp. vi., vii. (1712).

Andrewes a sympathetic but invaluable critic of the sermons of others, though his own pulpit power was so eminent that he might have been expected to have been a little impatient of the floundering attempts of less able men. "After his chaplains had preached in his chapel before him, he would sometimes privately request them for a sight of their notes, with very good words and full of encouragement; insomuch, as they would profess of him, that they would never desire a more candid auditor."¹ Of course there are two kinds of candour in criticism, the one rejoicing in brutal frankness, and the other singling out the excellences of the matter under consideration, that its faults might be the more gently and effectively dealt with and amended. It was the second of these which marked Andrewes; where he could praise, he commended without stint; and where strict justice compelled his censure, he spoke with all the gentleness of a man who knew what was capable of amendment, but who studiously avoided giving any discouragement. Indeed, this very modesty and unruffled kindness of heart were his most lovable virtues, and made him the true friend of those who came into contact with him. A gentler man has seldom breathed; yet with all his gentleness there was not a trace of meanness or weakness in his character, and there was that quiet dignity which prevented any from taking an undue liberty with him. A strong man he lived, and a strong man he died; and his memory will always be preserved as that of a strong man, who never exposed the weakness of others. The unobtrusive force of his disposition and his intellectual gifts communicated itself to his chaplains and to the very servants of his family, and never a bishop's household was better ordered. The kindness of the master endeared him to the servants, than which there can be no better testimony to the real and unaffected goodness of any man.

Now something remains to be said of his preaching power, which made him so great a force during his life and proved so attractive to multitudes of hearers of all classes. The learned wondered at his inexhaustible stores of exact knowledge; the sinful were deeply moved by the tenderness of his appeals and by his own transparent purity; the unlearned were charmed by the aptness and humour of his word-plays, and all alike who listened to

¹ *Abel Redivivus*, p. 454.

his earnest and weighty words were impressed by their nervous power and finished delivery. The taste of his day is not ours. Now tit-bits of general information are more esteemed than solid contributions to the spiritual life. Congregations of the cultured and uncultured alike have a tendency to be captivated by noisy claptrap, or by eloquent platitude. For these the reader will search in vain in the recorded words of the great bishop; he disdained the common artifice of uttering *ad captandum* arguments, and he sought to win a hearing by his uncompromising truth to conviction. His vast learning displays itself easily in every discourse, and is neither dragged in by the heels, nor made the occasion but the illustration of the matter in hand. He quoted his authorities in their original tongues according to the fashion of his time, sometimes embodying the sense of his quotations in the exposition of his theme, sometimes with free and vigorous translations. He used clever word-plays in a manner which might not suit the fastidious solemnity of modern listeners; but he was never irreverent in their employment, and when he indulged in his quiet humour, it was with subtle discrimination and with wonderful power. The ground-plan of every sermon was framed with consummate skill, and his object was always to convince his hearers of the truth that was in him, rather than to charm their ears with delicate tricks of style. But through all the plainness of his utterance, through all the mass of authorities which he used to support his arguments, there is a poetic and mystical strain of deep devotion and tender feeling like an undertone of sweet music giving a subtle harmony to the preacher's words and thoughts.

He could use an almost overpowering strength of language and a pitiless severity of exposition, when occasion served. On the first anniversary at the Gunpowder Plot he preached before the King at Whitehall, and he took the opportunity of pointing the moral of the conspiracy with much emphasis. Asking who made the plot, he answers himself thus:—"It was the devil's doing, or devising (the plot). *A Domino factum est hoc* (the deliverance). The *blow* was the devil's; the *ward* was God's. Not man, but the devil devised it: not man, but God defeated it. He that sat in heaven all this while, and from thence looked down, and saw all the doing of the

devil and his limbs, in that mercy of His, which is over all His works, to save the effusion of so much blood, to preserve the souls of so many innocents, to keep this land from so foul a confusion, to show still some token, some sensible token upon us for good, that *they which hate us, may see it and be ashamed* (Ps. lxxxvi. 17); but especially, that that was so lately united, might not be so soon dissolved; He took the matter into His own hand. And if ever God showed, that He had a hook in Leviathan's nose; that the devil can go no further than his chain; if ever that there is in Him more power to *help*, than in Satan to *hurt*; in this He did it. And as the devil's claws to be seen in the former; so God's right hand in this mighty thing (He brought to pass) and all the fingers of it."¹ This powerful passage, and the whole of the sermon is no less forceful, would thrill through the minds of his hearers, with whom the memory of the horrible design was yet fresh, and the King himself would feel that he and his were under God's protection, in a manner that only those who have escaped from a terrible danger can experience. That Andrewes would not please the Romanist contrivers of the treason must be admitted; but it was not his object to content them, and he spoke out all his thought with a fearless frankness which would ring through London, and make the priestly conspirators writhe with impotent fury.

In a later sermon in the same place and upon the same fruitful theme Andrewes gives evidence of an uncompromising hostility to the Pope and to the whole College of Cardinals. One of the objects of the plot was to recall the wandering sheep of England to the narrow fold of Rome, an object which he ridicules with un pitying scorn. "What change?" he asks with a look, which the reader can see even at this distance of time. "Why religion, or the Church-government, or somewhat (they know not well what) stands awry. Ye shall change your religion (said they of this day) and have one for it, wherein for your comfort, you shall not understand a word (not you of the people) what you either sing or pray; and for variety, you shall change a whole communion for a half. Now a blessed exchange, were it not?"² Here though the tone is calmer, as distance from the event could not fail to make it, the great preacher speaks in no measured terms of his abhorrence both of the methods and superstitions of the

¹ *Collected Sermons*, p. 599.

² *Idem*, p. 619.

Roman Church. A scholar himself, he could understand the service of the Mass ; but he saw its effect upon the unlearned who could not follow a word of their worship, and who thus turned that worship into a gross superstition, if not into a positive mockery. With all his wholehearted sincerity he had found the blessedness of the freedom of Protestantism, and he was not minded to exchange liberty for slavery, and personal communion for sacerdotalistic mediation. That such a man should be considered to have been the inspiring force of the modern Tractarian Movement seems almost absurd. He would have none of Romanist assumption, nor was he a friend to its paler reflex in a Protestant Church. Certain elements of ritual he loved, but sacerdotalism he abhorred.

Before illustrating his tenderer style, some points of his manner may be noted for the benefit of the modern divine. Alliteration, assonance and antithesis are distinguishing features of the first quotation, and each is used most effectively to point a contrast and to press home the moral. Caustic humour with a touch of sarcasm sparingly used is the prominent characteristic of the second, and its effect upon the hearers may be easily imagined, from the fact that its scathing words are not out of date to-day when the Romeward tendency is so pronounced as to make sensible Englishmen wonder whether they have not returned to the darker ages of our history. Though not perhaps so great a master of alliteration and assonance as was Thomas Fuller, Andrewes uses each in its place, and he never transgressed the bounds of good taste, which must be reluctantly admitted to be one of Fuller's occasional vices. But the force of the good bishop's antitheses can be fully felt, and if he had any Papists amongst his hearers, as was not impossible in a Court where there were men who played fast and loose between two communions, they must have smarted to some purpose beneath the strong, direct words, and shuddered at the terrible contrast between Protestantism and Popery, which the preacher enforced. That Andrewes was as strong as he was tender will be doubtful to no one who will take the trouble to read the ten sermons on the Gunpowder Treason, which are preserved in his collected works. He saw far into the heart of a matter, and shy as he was in private life, he never shrank from saying what he saw in his public utterances. If he were a lamb in the cloister, he

was a lion in the pulpit, as his controversial opponents soon discovered.

His sermons on the Nativity and upon the Resurrection are amongst the finest of their kind in our pulpit literature. However overflowing they may be with learned illustrations, and of these there is no stint, they are conspicuous for their triumphant trust and their fervid piety. In his fourth sermon he speaks of the fulness of time and its fruits thus: "And so growing from grace to grace, finally from this fulness, we shall come to be partakers of another yet behind, to which we aspire. For all this but the fulness of *time*; but for that the fulness of *eternity*, when time shall be run out and his glass empty, *Et tempus non erit amplius*: which is at His next sending. For yet once more shall God send Him, and He come again. At which coming we shall then indeed receive the fulness of our redemption, not from the *Law* (that we have already), but from *corruption*, to which our bodies yet are subject; and receive the full fruition of the inheritance, whereto we are here but adopted. And then it will be perfect, complete, absolute fulness indeed, when we shall all be filled with the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Not as here he is something (and but something) in every one; but then *omnia in omnibus*. And then the measure shall be so full, as it cannot enter into us, we cannot hold it; we must enter into it; *intra in gaudium Domini tui*. To this we aspire, and to this in the fulness appointed to every one of our times, Almighty God, bring us by Him and for His sake, that in this fulness of time was sent to work for us in His person; and work it in us by the operation of His blessed spirit."¹ The eloquence of this passage is indisputable, and the tone of mysticism which pervades it springs from the deep conviction and the long hours of private communion of the preacher. The same spirit is observable in all of these sermons on the Nativity, and in many others. Andrewes spoke not so much what he believed as what he knew, and that is the secret of his success as a preacher. He made his hearers feel that he was closer to God than they, and they heard him and were satisfied. Only a man who is in part a mystic can do this; and only a mystic who is in part practical can produce a similar effect.

Throughout his sermons the attentive reader perceives

¹ *Collected Sermons*, p. 13,

a close adherence to the Articles, as drawn up under the auspices of Edward VI., and as revised by the theologians of Elizabeth. But his mind was too Catholic to be thereby prevented from seeing the good in the system of John Calvin, though he had an instinctive dislike of the Genevan method of Church government. As has been said, he took the view of the Eucharist, which is expounded in the Book of Common Prayer, and not the veiled Romanism of the doctrine of the modern Anglo-Catholic, as he loves to call himself with a ludicrous deficiency of philological insight. It is not within the scope of this study to trace in detail the theology of this great prelate; those who wish to know what he believed, and why, will find his doctrine set forth clearly in his various sermons, a thoughtful perusal of which will amply repay the modern reader. His influence remains in all that is highest and best in the national Church, and it is to be regretted that more of those who profess to be his disciples do not read his works, in order to correct some of the Romanising crudities of their theological tendencies. Quite as strongly as Joseph Hall, the Puritan Bishop of Norwich, Andrewes would have maintained, and does in fact maintain, that there is no peace with Rome. Some of the older ceremonies he loved and practised; but he knew what he would have, and he would have been the last person in the land to have sent over a deputation to the Pope to humbly crave his gracious recognition of the validity of Anglican Orders. Let those who imagine that he had any leanings in this direction read his ten sermons on the Gunpowder Treason, and they will both derive much benefit from the sermons themselves, and learn that one of the greatest of the bishops of our history was convinced that the cleavage from the older Church at the time of the Reformation was an abiding cleavage, a gulf across which no bridge of compromise could by any means known to man be thrown.

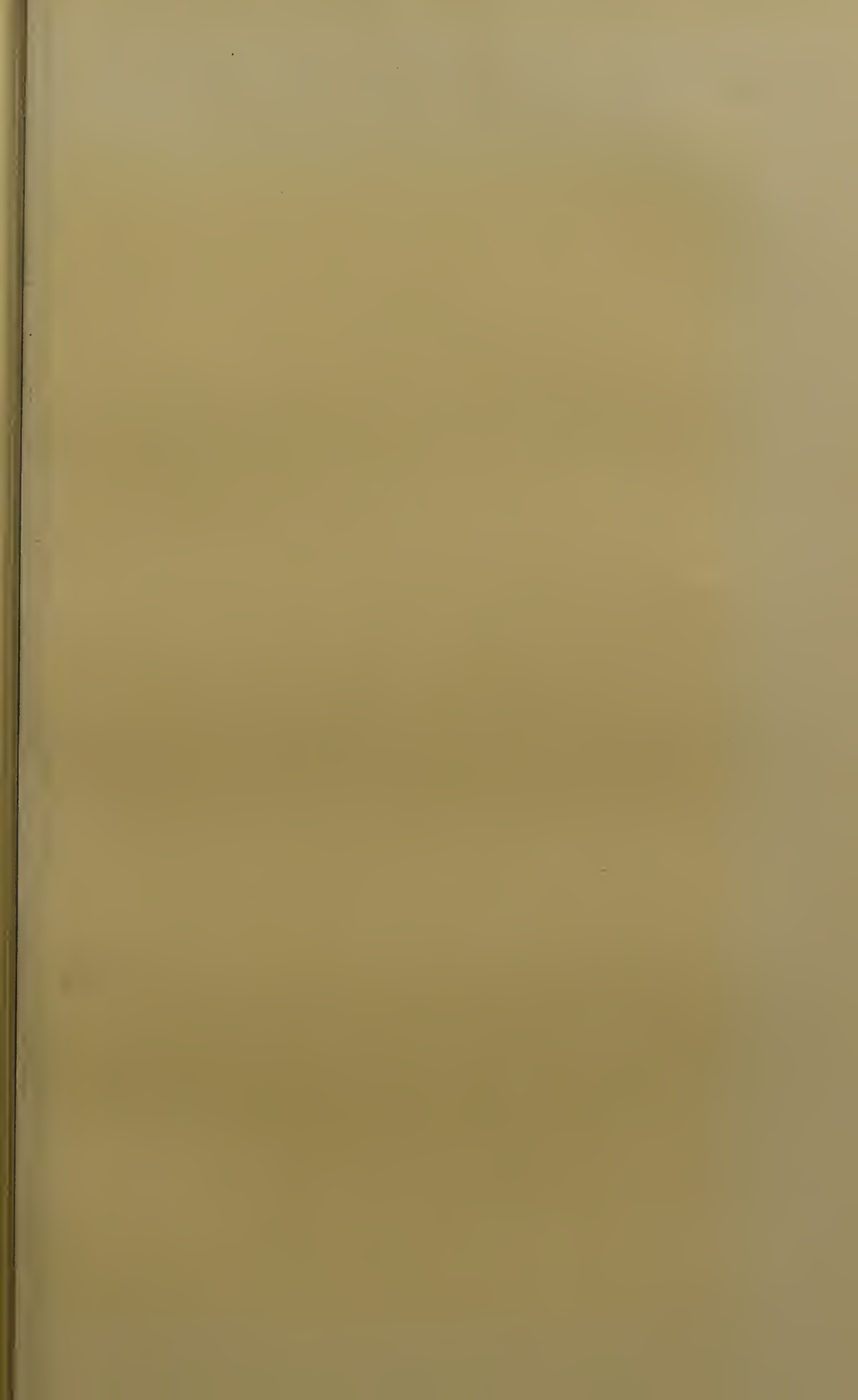
In the midst of his mysticism Andrewes has many sermons of a distinctly practical type, which show how deeply he felt the need that every man should do his duty. He saw, on the one hand, corruption and license walking side by side through the vicious society of his day; while upon the other was the grim religious view of the Puritan. To him both of these pronounced extremes were repellent, though from very different reasons; for license he had no toleration whatever, and he never failed to rebuke its

manifestations to the face, while he disliked the outward rigidity of Puritanism, which he regarded with feelings akin to distrust. He saw and respected the moral purity of the average Presbyterian, he noted the contrast between the foul language of the courtiers and the prim yet godly speech of the Puritan. But the system of the Presbytery he did not love; it seemed to him a needless unsettling of the primitive model, and he viewed with grave displeasure the so-called free prayer of its ministers. It therefore stands all the more conspicuously to his credit that he refrained from persecution, and in most cases even from repression. His broad mind and his kindly soul shrunk back with horror from propagating the Gospel by any such means as had cast an abiding and richly deserved odium upon the leaders of the Inquisition. He relied upon the surer methods of persuasion, and he bent all the powers of his commanding intellectual gifts upon this charitable aim. He argued, preached, prayed, and conferred; but he refused to put into force the authority, which was his by virtue of his position, except to reduce clamorous opponents to silence. That he did not succeed in the Primacy of the English Church was a national misfortune as grave in its own kind as the later appointment of a narrow-minded man like Laud, who was lovable enough in private, but who was a theological Tartar in his public capacity.

It was on the 25th of September, 1626, that the saintly bishop passed away at Winchester House, in Southwark, in the seventy-first year of his age. He was buried in the upper aisle of St. Saviour's Church in the same borough, and his epitaph, though long, does not in any way exaggerate his merits. Discharging the arduous duties of a man of affairs for the greater part of his life, he lived with all the purity of a saint. But he was not a saint like many of those in the Calendar, whose only title to the holy name is absolute retirement from the responsibilities and duties of the world. He lived in the world and for the world, but he lived with God and for God at the same time. The tender affections of his weeping friends followed him to his grave; they knew that they had lost what could never be replaced to them on earth, and they embalmed his memory with grateful love. The mighty preacher, who had thrilled thousands with his matchless eloquence, was silent now. The universal scholar had

gone to the quiet of heaven to add to his store of learning. The gentle saint, who had found heaven on earth, had rent the veil and moved into the Holy of holies. Working almost to the last sand-grain in the glass of his life, he had laid down his duties for other men to discharge. But his remembrance lives still, fresh and green as in the saddened hearts of his friends. Great as a preacher, a theologian, a scholar, and a saint, he lives and shall live amongst the mighty men of our race. His work needs not our poor praise, from which his modesty would have shrunk back almost with disgust. His honour is in the hearts of all men who are truly religious, and now he wears the unfading crown of eternal life. He is gone to that heaven of which he had many glimpses here on earth, and which is now his for ever. But the memories of men will not let go those whom they love and reverence, and the heaven of loving remembrance after death, which he never coveted in life, shall not be taken away from him. Words cannot measure his spiritual power, and the latter-day critic stands hushed in that august presence, which was able to awe the vanity of a king like James. But he is not silent in death; his works remain to testify to his worth, and especially that book of his *Private Devotions*, soiled with his finger-marks and stained with his tears, tells of the conflicts of his soul and the victories won. He lives in his spoken words, which may not charm the taste of the frivolous reader of drawing-room rubbish, but which will remain when the fires of time have purged the literature of our land from the dross of positive filth and veiled prurience. His monument remains, and those who see it can but say, in the words of the Book which he loved more than life, and part of which he taught to speak more truthfully to posterity, "Though dead, he yet speaketh."

"Ecce mihi subito Praesul Wintonius astat,
 Sidereum nitido fulsit in ore jubar:
 Vestis ad auratos defluxit candida talos,
 Infula divinum cinxerat alba caput,
 Dumque senex tali incedit venerandus amictu
 Intremuit laeto florea terra sono.
 Agmina gemmatis plaudunt caelestia pennis,
 Pura triumphali personat aethra tuba.
 Quisque novum amplexu comitem cantuque salutat,
 Hosque aliquis placido misit ab ore sonos:
 'Nate, veni, et patrii felix cape gaudia regni,
 Semper abhinc duro, nate, labore vaca,'"





GEORGE ABBOT.

From Lodge's "Portraits" (1821-1834).

THE ARCHBISHOP

GEORGE ABBOT

“Justum et tenacem propositi virum
non civium ardor prava jubentium,
non vultus instantis tyranni
mente quatit solida, neque Auster
dux inquieti turbidus Hadriae,
nec fulminantis magna manus Jovis;
si fractus illabatur orbis,
impavidum ferient ruinae.”

HORACE, *Odes*, III. iii. 1-8.

OF all the men in authority in our land, there is perhaps no one who, by duty and conscience, is more bound to act with scrupulous justice and spotless integrity than the Archbishop of Canterbury. He is the natural representative and the practical head of the national Church, whose watchful observation is, or ought to be, over all that is done within its borders. He it is who has to decide the perplexing problems put forth by the contending sections of its various branches, and the reins of compromise, by which alone it can be driven straight, are in his hands. Like Justice, though not blindfold, he is constrained to hold the balance between the *Rock* on the one side and the *Church Times* on the other; and if he finds the one somewhat sandy and the other a little acrid, by force of his position he is compelled to keep his opinions discreetly to himself. Truly he requires the keen eye of the lynx and the calm wisdom of Solon, the strong hand of Themistocles and the discretion of Pericles, the brilliant dash of Alcibiades and the equal temper of Socrates; indeed, he must combine within himself all the Christian virtues with profound learning and supreme skill in diplomacy if he is to discharge his complicated functions with anything approaching to universal satisfaction. On him the responsibility largely rests of the harmonious and effective working of the great institution committed to

his care ; and though he must often sink beneath the weight of his burden, he is expected by his critics to bear it unflinchingly to the end of his life. Indeed, he receives little sympathy until he rests in the Abbey, when men begin to wonder how he contrived to do his duties so well, and he is honoured just at the time when he could most easily spare the tardy tribute of posthumous praise.

But great as is the archbishop's responsibility to-day, it was in some directions greater in the seventeenth century. Then he was compelled by the unkindness of fate, or moved by his own ambitious desires, to assist the king in his political, no less than in his ecclesiastical, government. His was a voice of supreme importance at the table of the Privy Council, and in the more arbitrary Court of the Star-Chamber ; while he was *ex-officio* president of the Court of High Commission. It was the last of these offices which caused him most searching of heart and legal precedents too ; by its instrumentality he was entrusted with the arduous task of solving the problems and settling the differences which continually disturbed the peace of the Church. The Romanists, on the one hand, were a powerful and aggressive party, who had to be coerced by harsh penal laws ; while the Puritans, on the other, were no less difficult to persuade, and infinitely more stubborn in the resistance of repression. Appointed as often as not by the king on his single responsibility, and sometimes in opposition to the known wishes of the bishops, he was in the main dependent upon the king alone, as head of the Church, though he did not on that account escape the frequent censures of the leaders of the nation. Should he commit an indiscretion, or an absolute sin, and thus be rendered uncanonical, it was the king alone who could absolve him in conformity with, or in opposition to, such public opinion as then existed. In his own sphere he was as absolute, though not so infallible, as the Pope himself ; and if any man is to exercise absolute power, he must be endowed with the wisdom and purity of an angel. Moreover, the king looked to him for advice in such worldly matters as the procuring and administration of the royal revenue, to give discreet counsel on grave political questions, to punish contumacious Nonconformists, whether Romanists or Puritans, and to keep strict order and tranquillity throughout the Church.

One further and by no means easy duty fell to the

archbishop's lot in a disreputable Court like that of James I. He was expected to be in frequent attendance, and to keep a blind eye to the vices of the great courtiers without sacrificing any of his archiepiscopal dignity and purity of life. Furthermore, a certain amount of flattery was deemed necessary by the great ones of the country, and a liberal quantity by the vain king. The primate was almost forced to use a well-oiled tongue, and at the same time to forfeit none of the respect which was due to his high office. If he could laugh at the coarse jests of the ribald monarch, he fared better than if he felt himself compelled to request that not over-cleanly Solomon to pay proper regard to his cloth. So, too, it was part of his duty to preach before the king without wounding the royal vanity. Moreover, he had to hold his own against unscrupulous favourites of, to say the least, questionable morality. That James, when left to himself, really meant to govern justly may well be conceded ; but never king was more susceptible than he to the plausible flattery of evil men. The last impression held its place in his fickle mind ; and however good his former intentions had been, he was apt to forget them under the influence of a handsome and sometimes infamous courtier. He had the highest opinion of his own shrewdness in the judgment of character, yet few of our sovereigns have been so easily and so completely duped by the appearance of strength in the impetuosity of overbearing weakness. When, then, the archbishop was compelled to hold his position and influence against men of this kind, he stood at a grave disadvantage. He owed his high place commonly to his profound scholarship, and not many scholars are men of affairs. Hence it came to pass that he often saw himself overborne by men who had not a tithe of his academic learning, but who understood the length of the king's foot. However much he may have coveted the office from a distance, when he had once obtained it he found himself not by any means reclining on a bed of roses, or at all events the roses of his consolation were thickly strewn with the thorns of frequent annoyance.

Whether George Abbot fulfilled, or could have fulfilled, these various and exacting requirements, or whether he failed to a certain extent to discharge the duties of the office with which he was entrusted, remains to be seen. But whatever his shortcomings may have been, it cannot

be denied that within his lights no man of his age exemplified more truly the characteristics of the "just and resolute man," of whom Horace has sung. He was born at Guildford in Surrey on the 29th of October, 1562; his father, Maurice Abbot, a cloth-worker of that town, and his mother, Alice Marsh, had both been confessors during the Marian persecution, but they had succeeded in coming off with their lives. There can be little doubt that they transmitted to their most distinguished son his intense hatred of Popery, whether in its acknowledged magnificence, or its veiled presence in the national Church. Their three sons won no small distinction in life: Maurice, the youngest, became Lord Mayor of London, and he had the honour of being the first of the Knights created by James I. shortly after his accession to the crown of England; Robert, the eldest, a scholar of considerable note, rose to the bishopric of Salisbury; while George, the subject of the present study, found his way to the highest position in the English Church.¹ Aubrey,² who has commonly a credulous love of the marvellous, tells a curious story concerning the birth of George. Some days before that event his mother dreamed that, if she could eat a jack or pike, her child would be a son. In the morning, full of her dream, she went down to the river Wey to fetch water, and when she dipped her pail into the stream, she chanced to bring up a pike therein. In great joy she hastened home, and cooked and ate the mystic fish, in order to achieve, if fate permitted, the fulfilment of her vision. Let this story go for what it is worth, and be it remarked that stranger superstitions have found their way into the blue-books of the modern Society for Psychical Research, her son George was born not long afterwards. The pike must surely have been a big one, if it in any way portended the future fame of the boy; but Aubrey does not say whether Mistress Abbot ate it all herself.

At a suitable, though somewhat early age, Abbot was sent with his elder brother to King Edward's School at Guildford, the master of which was at that time Francis Taylor, under whose fostering care he soon succeeded in distinguishing himself. In 1578, at the age of sixteen, he was entered at Balliol College, where he took his Bachelor's degree with so much credit that on November 29th, 1583,

¹ *Abel Redivivus*, p. 539.

² *Antiquities of Surrey* (1719), Vol. III. p. 281.

He was elected Probationary Fellow of his College. Proceeding to his Master's degree on December 17th, 1585, he took Holy Orders in his twenty-fourth year, and he soon made a name by the vigour and eloquence of his sermons. In 1593 he took his first degree in Divinity, and on the 9th of May, 1597, he attained to the final distinction of this Doctorate. So great was his reputation for preaching and scholarship at Oxford, which at that period was like himself deeply tinged with Calvinism, that he was elected master of University College during the same year ; whereupon he at once resigned his Fellowship at Balliol, to devote himself exclusively to the duties of his new position.¹ (Conscientiousness almost to a morbid extent was Abbot's conspicuous virtue, and he never undertook more than he felt himself able to perform. The foregoing sacrifice affords a favourable illustration of this characteristic, and that at a time when men of well-known integrity had no scruples in accepting several pieces of simultaneous academic preferment. He took great pains in the government of his adopted college, while he availed himself of this position to repress obtrusive Arminians, who had the courage of their convictions, and who ventured to express them in no measured terms.

It was during Abbot's residence at Oxford in this capacity that he came into contact with William Laud ; whereupon those notorious theological differences arose, which were henceforth to sunder two good and honest men, until they were parted by death. Peter Heylin, whom his smarting opponents dubbed with no small truth "lying Peter," most ungenerously asserts that Abbot persecuted his adversary merely from spite—a libel which is worthy of its author, who could only perceive spiteful persecution when his party were the sufferers, and righteous repression when they were the persecutors.² That men of such strength, not to say obstinacy of conviction and of tenets so fundamentally opposed, should have had any sympathetic understanding of one another, was utterly impossible. Laud was an Arminian, resolutely determined to force his opinions upon those unhappy and foolish persons who differed from him ; nor had he the slightest particle of toleration in his nature. Abbot, on the other hand, was

¹ Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ Oxonienses*, Vol. II. col. 561.

² Heylin, *Life of Laud* (1671), pp. 49, 50, 51, *et passim*. The bitter chaplain of Laud loses no opportunity of slandering Abbot.

“a very learned man, stiffly principled in the doctrines of St. Augustine, which they, who understand it not, call Calvinism, therefore disrelished by them, who incline to the Massilian and Arminian tenets.”¹ That the latter saw veiled Popery in the teaching of the former, however innocent it may appear in the eyes of many modern theologians, is certain. Hence he, who hated Romanism in any form with undying animosity, seldom lost a favourable opportunity of making the weight of his repressive hand felt by all whom he suspected of tampering with the Scarlet Woman. Whatever Abbot's treatment of Laud may have been, nothing can justify Laud's reprisals on Abbot, which were so cruel that a suspicion of something like revengeful feelings forces itself upon the mind of the impartial student.

Of Abbot's theological writings nothing need be said here; they represent the fury of a dead controversy, and though they were able, learned and expressed with a considerable degree of eloquence, they give evidence rather of the stubborn prejudices of a strong man than of the effective arguments of a subtle disputant. It is his official career which is of most interest, and which shed clearest light upon the man himself and the times in which he lived. On March 4th, 1599, he was appointed Dean of Winchester,² from which it is also asserted that he was removed to the deanery of Gloucester. But the latter statement can hardly be true, from two comparatively strong reasons. In the first place that deanery was held by another man, at the very time at which Abbot is said to have been translated thither; in the second place it would have been a change without preferment, seeing that James, when at a later period he gave it to Laud, is said to have styled it “a shell without a kernel.”³ Next year the dean was appointed Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, an office which he filled with so much satisfaction to the heads of the colleges that he held it thrice in succession. It was during this period that he attacked Laud, then a young scholar of great distinction and an apostle of Arminianism, an offence which was neither forgotten nor forgiven by his opponent when he had the opportunity

¹ Hamond L'Estrange, *History of the Reign of King Charles* (1655), p. 127.

² Wood, *Athenæ*, Vol. II. col. 561.

³ Laud, *Troubles and Trial* (1695), p. 4.

of turning the tables upon him at a later period. When, then, Heylin accuses Abbot of spite against Laud, his accusation comes with indifferent grace from one who was himself trained under the school of persecuting sincerity not unmingled with ignoble retaliation. But little justice can be expected from one who went out of his way to malign his old opponent Thomas Fuller, who lay quiet in his grave.

In 1608 Abbot's most influential patron, the Earl of Dorset, died, but he found a worthy successor and a constant friend in George Hume, Earl of Dunbar. Some years before this event, and while he was still Vice-Chancellor, Abbot made his first conspicuous appearance in affairs outside the University. The Cross at Charing had fallen into ruins, and a proposal was set on foot to restore it to its former beauty. The citizens of London, who were then growing more and more Puritan with the passing of years, had a strong dislike of what they termed the Papistical adornment of the original cross. In their straits they appealed to the Vice-Chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge to assist them in settling the vexed question of the restoration. Abbot's answer was what might have been expected from one of his Calvinistic views, and it was couched in terms which clearly showed his undoubted confidence of the truth of his convictions. He urged that the original crucifix surmounted by a dove should not be re-erected, but that a pyramid, or some similar structure, which was merely ornamental and not symbolic, should take its place. Bancroft, Bishop of London, who had little sympathy with such hatred of symbolism, took up the cudgels against Abbot's suggestion, but in vain. He stormed, but the citizens of London caught eagerly at a means of escape from their difficulty, and in defiance of their bishop's hostility they finally adopted the suggested restoration. This circumstance, which may appear trivial in itself, gives an insight into the Vice-Chancellor's hatred of Popery, which led him into the opposite superstition of a hatred of superstition. It throws some light, too, upon the problems which occupied the minds of the Londoners of the first half of the seventeenth century, no less than upon the guiding principles of Abbot's future ecclesiastical policy.¹

During the year 1608, James, without showing any

¹ *Biographia Britannica*, Vol. I. p. 4; note a.

correct appreciation of the stubbornness of his northern subjects, set about the impossible task of forcing an episcopacy upon Scotland. His object in itself was laudable; he desired to unite his three kingdoms together under the same government and the same religious system, and so far at least he showed himself ahead of the statecraft of his time. Hence he appointed the Earl of Dunbar and the Archbishop of St. Andrews, to represent him in the Scottish Parliament and General Assembly to consider his wishes in that direction. Abbot accompanied his patron to the north, and by his tact and moderation he was able to render the King what he felt to be an important service, and which probably led to the rapidity of his preferment. He appears to have managed matters with so much skill that at Glasgow, at the General Assembly, the Presbyterian members were induced to pass the following resolutions: "That the King should have the indiction of all General Assemblies. That the bishops, or their deputies, should be perpetual moderators of the diocesan synods. That no excommunication or absolution should be pronounced without their approbation. That all presentations of benefices should be made by them, and that the deprivation or suspension of ministers should belong to them. That every minister, at his admission to a benefice, should take the oath of supremacy and canonical obedience, that the visitation of the diocese shall be performed by the bishop or his deputy only, and finally that the bishop should be moderator of all conventions for exercisings and prophesyings."¹ That this settlement was more apparent than real, must be admitted by all who have studied the history of the Scottish Church. It left episcopacy as a mere name, while the fundamental Presbyterian government remained unchanged. But though it was a barren victory, it was sufficient for James, who was contented that the proud stomachs of the Scots should have consented to acknowledge his authority in matters ecclesiastical in the slightest degree.

Heylin with his customary unfairness to more moderate men tries to weaken Abbot's influence in calming so tumultuous an assembly as those of the Scottish Church were wont to be. But less prejudiced historians are more willing than he to give the English clergyman his due. Calderwood, the historian of the northern Church, is

¹ Heylin, *History of Presbyterianism* (1670), p. 387.

amongst these, who expresses both wonder and admiration¹ for the tact and skill of the clerical negotiator. Nor can it be denied, in spite of Peter, that had the apparent settlement, which he had laboured to accomplish, been loyally accepted, Abbot would have achieved a Herculean task, before which Laud and Charles together sank back discomfited. It was at this time that the notorious George Sprot was tried and executed for his participation in the somewhat shadowy conspiracy of the Gowries. At his trial and death Abbot was present, of which he has left his impressions in a letter prefixed to the official version of that obscure matter.² It must not be omitted that before he took this journey he was nominated by the king to take his share in the then new translation of the Bible, and he thus became one of the eight translators, all of whom hailed from the University of Oxford, to whom were entrusted the rendering of the four *Gospels*, the *Acts of the Apostles*, and the *Apocalypse*. That he was so distinguished must be accepted as a sufficient proof of his scholarly reputation, and is an adequate answer to the contemptuous reference of Clarendon: "He had been head, or master of one of the poorest Colleges in Oxford, and *had learning sufficient for that province*."³ That James himself was a sounder judge in such matters than the historian of the blunders and misfortunes of his son, cannot be doubted for a moment, and Abbot's works give evidence of a learning as much beyond the compass of Clarendon as it fell short of that of Laud.

Both for his actual services in Scotland and his fame for learning, James made Abbot bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in December, 1609, from which see he was translated to that of London within less than a year. Next year Bancroft, the primate and bitter persecutor of the Puritan party, passed away, and those whom he had persistently repressed with an iron severity awaited with breathless interest the appointment of his successor. A sincere but unscrupulous partisan has left on record the action of the bishops in this emergency, but in a manner calculated to blacken as far as he could the memory of Abbot. "It was resolved," he says, "to fix on Andrewes for the man; a man, as one says very well of him, of

¹ *Biographia Britannica*, Vol. I. pp. 4 and 5.

² *Truth brought to Light by Time* (1692), "To the Reader," p. 2.

³ *Great Rebellion* (1702-4), Vol. I. p. 68.

primitive antiquity, in whom was found whatever is desirable in a bishop, even to admiration, to whom they found the King to be well affected, for taking up the bucklers for him against Cardinal Bellarmine. The motion was no sooner made but it was embraced, and they departed from the King with as good an assurance as if the business had been done, and Andrewes settled in the throne of Canterbury. In confidence whereof some of them retired to their country houses, and others lessened their accustomed diligence about the King, and thereby gave an opportunity to the Earl of Dunbar (a powerful minister of State) to put in for Abbot, who had attended him in some negotiations which he had with the Scots; and he put in so powerfully in his behalf, that at last he carried it, and had the King's hand to the passing of the public instruments, before the other bishops ever heard of the plot."¹ That Heylin has done injustice alike to the object of his animosity and to the tenacious memory of James is certain. The King had not forgotten Abbot's services, and though he was personally well inclined to Andrewes, he may have thought him too little a man of affairs for so prominent a position as the primacy of England. The light of time enables later critics to perceive that he made a less wise choice than might perhaps have been expected from one who was determined to force uniformity upon the Church. Furthermore, James was a Calvinist, and Abbot's Calvinism would be an additional reason for his preferment.

The bishops, who for once had made a wise choice, and who were disappointed of their man, do not seem at any time to have looked upon his substitute either with favour or with confidence. They knew that moderation in certain unpalatable directions would now succeed persecution, and that the most powerful of their opponents would be suffered to preach, so long as they ruled their utterances with discretion. Thus their episcopal authority would receive a severe check, and their private dignity would be cruelly mortified. Laud, too, would have his especial grounds of apprehension; knowing, as he did, that the

¹ Heylin, *Life of Laud* (1671), p. 59. That Heylin looked upon Abbot as the direct cause of the later troubles, by his culpable laxity to the Puritans, possibly accounts for some of his spite. Furthermore, the enmity between Abbot and Laud increased the faithful chaplain's spite. To wiser critics it would seem that Laud was quite as much the cause of the Civil War as his predecessor. Cf. also Hamond L'Estrange, *History of King Charles*, p. 64, to which Heylin refers in the above quotation.

new archbishop regarded his theological vagaries as coquetting with Popery, he would feel that the door of preferment would be slammed in his face. Nay, more, he would henceforth have little opportunity of extending his influence in the direction of securing that orderly uniformity in the Church which was his dearest object in life. That Abbot was at all times more of a statesman than a theologian, the course of his future conduct proved as fully and as clearly as the reverse process in the later life of Laud hastened his doom. The bishops complained from time to time of the new primate's extraordinary "remissness in not exacting strict conformity to the prescribed orders of the Church in point of ceremony," which "seemed to resolve those legal determinations to their first principle of indifferency, and led into such inconformity, as the future reduction of those tender-conscienced men to long-discontinued obedience was interpreted as an innovation."¹ James thus had taken the rod, with which he had been wont to scourge the Puritans, out of his hands by his appointment of Abbot, and henceforth any absolute uniformity in the national Church was rendered impossible for the future.

Whether this part of the archbishop's policy was before or behind his age, let posterity judge. His motive was rather hatred to Romanism than affection towards Presbyterianism; and in a death-grapple with "the old man of the Seven Hills" he estimated doctrinal orthodoxy—that is rigid Calvinism—as of graver import than heresies in Church government. As to its result upon the nation, when followed by the restrictive tyranny of Laud, there can be but one opinion—that the two combined were the immediate cause of the Civil War. That Abbot himself was not opposed to ceremonies as such, as his enemies would have us believe, may be seen from the fact that once at least he issued an order that all communicants should receive the elements kneeling, while it is said that it was his habit to use the wafer in this service. But there can be no doubt that he viewed the growing influence of Arminianism with as much disfavour as did the Puritans themselves; to him its disciples seemed to be tainted with Popery, and any such taint was sufficient to arouse his dogged opposition. For these reasons he induced James to send a message to the States-General

¹ Hamond L'Estrange, *History of King Charles*, p. 127.

of Holland, to request the removal of Conrad Vorst from the theological professorship of Leyden.¹ The King's *Declaration*, when he received nothing but evasive answers, was so strongly anti-Arminian that Heylin has some little difficulty in accounting for its theological bias ; but according to his habit he lays the whole of the blame upon Abbot. Had he understood more clearly the ruling principle of the shambling Solomon's theology, which was undoubtedly Calvinistic, he might have spared himself much pains and avoided the needless display of not a little ill-temper. Moreover, it seems quite to have escaped his notice what a left-handed compliment he was paying the royal theologian in ascribing the dictation of his statement of faith to the archbishop. But blindness of partisanship makes its victims discover strange fictions, and impels them to inventions fearful and wonderful.

When almost all of Abbot's critics expend their ingenuity in pointing out the weaknesses of his character and the defects of his archiepiscopal administration, it becomes necessary to inquire into his principles and motives before a sound conclusion can be reached in respect of his ecclesiastical policy. As has been said, the prime motive of his life was his hatred of Popery in every conceivable form. By this his estimate of his clergy was largely coloured, and from this his distrust of Laud arose. But he made no disguise of his views, nor did he strike any adversary in the dark. He spoke out his thoughts and his beliefs with an almost touching frankness, and during the course of his controversies he withstood those with whom he did not agree to the face. Hence it came about that, if Laud could see nothing but factious rebellion in the Puritans, he could perceive nothing but infamy in the views and practices of the Romanists. When, then, he found a party in the Church which openly and unceasingly denounced Popery with excessive bitterness, he did not, as was only natural in a man of his strength of conviction, press upon them the rigours of a strict conformity, which would only have ended by driving them out of the Church for all time. He could see with their eyes to a certain extent, though it must not for a moment be imagined that he was inspired by any liking for Presbyterianism as a system of Church government. The very fact that he was instrumental in inducing a Scottish

¹ Heylin, *History of Presbyterianism* (1670), p. 402.

General Assembly to admit of a limited episcopacy is sufficient testimony to his affection for this system. With a deep tinge of Calvinism in its milder form, he could sympathise with those who did not shrink from proclaiming the Genevan Gospel with greater force and less prudence; and so long as they did not attempt to overthrow constituted authorities, the weight of his discipline fell lightly upon them.

Furthermore, looking upon ecclesiastical affairs with the dangerously clear sight of a one-sided man, he could see within the Church itself a growing and influential party, who to him would seem to be veering round towards Rome. What he thought of the position of Andrewes cannot be discovered with any degree of precision; but the Bishop of Winchester was too saintly a man to be lightly condemned, and he also was extremely tender of tender consciences. But Laud appeared to Abbot to be a meddling busybody, who, if he were to have his own way, would introduce disorder into the Church, to say nothing of Popery. Moreover, the archbishop, in addition to his personal sympathies, had, as the salient characteristic of his somewhat narrow mind, a severe moderation, which showed itself to Protestants of every variety, but took no account of possible conscientiousness amongst the Papists. Hence his hand fell with a crushing weight upon the general body of the Romanists, though he could be kind and considerate to individuals of that religion. It would seem that, inspired by the horror occasioned by the Gunpowder Plot, he regarded those who yielded to the supremacy of the Pope as traitors to their country, in that they acknowledged a foreign potentate as head of their Church. He eyed them askance, too, from their utter disregard of scruple in matters political, so long as the good of their Church could be secured. Like Queen Elizabeth, he had found not a few to be political plotters, a circumstance which materially strengthened his conviction of the necessity of their suppression.

That he could be kind to particular priests is curiously shown by the following letter to the Attorney-General of 1626, which is here inserted out of its place to illustrate his character. Four priests—Preston, Warrington, Cannon, and Praton (?)—were imprisoned in the Clink, and they appear to have complained to him of the rigours of their treatment. Whereupon he wrote: "Good Mr. Attorney,

I thank you for acquainting me what was done yesterday at the Clink ; but I am of opinion that if you had curiously inquired upon the gentleman who gave the information, you should have found him to be a disciple of the Jesuits, for they do nothing but put tricks upon these poor men, who do live more miserable lives than if they were in the Inquisition in any parts beyond the seas. By taking the oath of allegiance and writing in defence of it, and opening some points of high consequence, they have so displeased the Pope, that if by any cunning they could catch them, they are sure to be burned or strangled for it. And once there was a plot to have taken Preston as he passed the Thames and to have shipped him into a bigger vessel, and so to have transported him unto Flanders, there to have made a martyr of him. King James always gave his protection to Preston and Warrington, as may easily be showed. Cannon is an old man, well affected to the cause, but meddleth not with any factions or seditions, as far as I can learn. They complain their books were taken from them, and a crucifix of gold, with some other things, which I hope are not carried out of the house, but may be restored again unto them ; for it is vain to think that priests will be without their beads, or pictures, or models of their saints ; and it is not improbable that before a crucifix they do often say their prayers. I leave the things to your best consideration, and hope that this deed of yours, together with my word, will restrain them from giving offence hereafter, if so be that lately they did give any. I heartily commend me unto you, and so rest, your very loving friend, G. CANTERBURY." ¹

The foregoing letter gives clear evidence that the political blends with the theological in the mind of Abbot, and that he was in part thus influenced in his treatment of those from whose tenets he bitterly dissented. But there is something touching and interesting in his manner of entering into their feelings and sympathising with their loss of what was of supreme importance to their religious observances. It would thus seem that under a somewhat harsh and forbidding exterior Abbot had a kind heart, and that he was ready to serve the captive priests according to his power, so long as he did no injury to the State.

¹ Frankland, *Annals of James I. and Charles I.* (1681), p. 121. N.B.—The *Clink* was in the borough of Southwark and county of Surrey. The Attorney-General was Sir Robert Heath.

Once more, in reference to his alleged encouragement of the Puritans, it must be borne in mind that at this time their objection was not so much to the form of service, nor even to the *Prayer Book* itself, as to the Arminian doctrine of some of its clergy and to plain popery. The King himself fully shared in these objections, so long as he was free from the folly of the Spanish match. He was no stickler for ornate ritual in worship, and upon one of his progresses, when he halted at York, he forbade the organ to be used during divine service. In the same spirit, when his attention was called to the fact that the chapel of Sidney College, Cambridge, had never been consecrated, he seems to have agreed with those who held that the celebration of worship within its walls for thirty years was sufficient consecration.¹ With such a master to support him, Abbot used his high place to save the national Church from what he believed to be the unwholesome leaven of popery. Taking a special interest in the weekday preachers or lecturers, wherever he had a voice in their appointment he was scrupulously careful to prevent the selection of any one with an Arminian bias. Doubtless this practice was due to the double reason of his conviction that Arminianism was a dangerous heresy and his pleasure in the outspoken denunciations hurled at Rome by the pronounced Calvinists.

Another charge, which was brought against the whole of his administration, was that he favoured the laity at the expense of the clergy. That this accusation has some foundation in fact seems not improbable from the contrary policy of Laud to engross into the hands of the clergy as many of the principal offices of state as he could contrive, and thus to exalt the dignity of the order in the eyes of the nation. Fuller says that he endeavoured to excuse his policy in this respect to a friend by protesting that he himself "was so severe to the clergy on purpose to rescue them from the severity of others, and to prevent the punishment of them by lay judges to their greater shame."² If the charge itself be true, there is some show of reason in this explanation, though it may well be doubted whether the sufferers fully appreciated the primate's paternal and precautionary measures. Indeed, there is no little plausibility in Heylin's malicious sugges-

¹ Fuller, *History of Cambridge* (1655), p. 155.

² Fuller, *Church History*, Bk. XI. p. 129.

tion that "the truer reason of it was that, having been neither parson, vicar, nor curate, he was altogether ignorant of those afflictions, which the clergy do too often suffer by the pride of some, and the avarice of others of their country neighbours."¹ There is no doubt that the private strictness of a retired life has a tendency to breed severity towards those whose strictness is less marked; and if the archbishop erred in this respect, it must at least be allowed that he erred in ignorance of the difficulties of the individual cases. But whatever be the truth of the charge itself, it must be admitted that Abbot conducted his ecclesiastical administration with rare moderation, and if he is censured by posterity for being too lax in Church discipline, Laud deserves no less blame for his exaggerated severity.

During the earlier years of his primacy Abbot enjoyed the firm friendship of James, who consulted him upon many points of statecraft, and sometimes followed his advice. But as the years went on, circumstances arose which weakened his hold over the fickle monarch, when it was found that the archbishop was stubborn in his opinions, and would not budge from them for fear of his royal master's displeasure. But of all the instances of his firmness to what he believed to be right, there is none which serves so highly to exalt him in the eyes of true-hearted Englishmen as his conduct in the despicable divorce of the infamous Countess of Essex. The details of this case are too revolting to be discussed at full length, but they must find a brief mention in any attempt to draw a true portrait of George Abbot. The boy Earl of Essex had been married to the child Lady Frances Howard, and they were only waiting for time to consummate their nuptials. But when the Earl returned from the Continent of a suitable age to live with his wife, she had seen Carr, Viscount of Rochester, and her guilty love had become his. To their illicit passion Sir Thomas Overbury had been one of the aids and abettors, and when he found that it was likely to end in marriage his opposition had cost him his life. The Earl of Essex at first appeared to be not unwilling for the divorce, so long as he was left free to marry another. His affections, at one time sincere and strong, had been quite alienated from his wife by her vicious conduct.² The reason for divorce, which she

¹ Heylin, *Life of Laud*, p. 230.

² *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 819.

assigned through her lawyers, was the Earl's *impotentia propter hanc*,¹ in which the King fully believed. Of course James may be said to have believed what he wished to believe; and in the present case there can be no question that having the divorce at heart he was ready to believe anything which would bring it to pass.

Hence a Commission was appointed to try and to decide the matter, which consisted of Abbot, though sorely against his will; John King, bishop of London; Andrewes, bishop of Ely; Neile, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield; and of the following six lawyers—Sir Julius Cæsar, Sir Daniel Donne, Sir Thomas Parry, Sir John Bennet, Dr. Francis James, and Dr. Thomas Edwards.² Of these Commissioners the first two and the last three were in favour of the reconciliation of the Earl and the Countess, and strongly opposed the nullity. Had the supporters of the divorce rested their argument on the general impotency of the Earl of Essex, something might have been said for them and for their position, though even in that case canon law would hardly have favoured them. But when the ground was narrowed down to *impotentia versus hanc*, they had little left to stand upon, as appeared when it became known two years later that the Countess of Essex had sought the aid of the wizard Forman to bring about this failure in her husband. Into the disgusting details of the suit we cannot enter here, but a careful perusal of the *State Trials*, in which they are set forth at full length, clearly shows that the Countess and her supporters had no grounds for their action. The woman herself—for lady she can be called in no sense of that word save the courtesy title, which was hers by birth—resorted to the vilest means to achieve her unrighteous object—witchcraft, adultery, lies, murder; and those who can believe her in the face of all these are welcome to their belief. Let it be granted that her marriage was a cruel mistake on the part of her parents and of the King; even that will not serve her turn. Other mistaken marriages are made every day; but they would not condone offences like hers. Her husband might justly have sued for a divorce from her; but when she sued for a divorce from him, her plea was little short of an impertinence.

Abbot³ has left his account of the circumstances of the

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 785–787.

² *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 806.

³ *Idem*, Vol. II. pp. 805–829.

trial, and of the disfavour into which he fell with the King, because he persisted in taking his stand for truth and right. The whole of the story is set down with some indignation, but without malice, and can but enhance the reader's respect for his steady uprightness in the face of grave danger. First he asked leave of the King by means of the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain and father of the plaintiff, to speak with the Earl of Essex, with the result that his conversation with that hapless husband tended to set him in stronger opposition to the suggested trial.¹ Hereupon, perceiving the difficulty of the case, he requested the aid of other Commissioners, whereupon those already named were appointed. When they met, and the alleged reason for the divorce was narrowed down to *impotentia versus hanc*, Abbot remarked to the counsel for the plaintiff, "You have laid a very narrow bridge for yourselves to go over." Andrewes, who had talked with the King on the subject, was silent² during the greater part of the proceedings. Probably he saw in the nullity the only means of repairing an injury unintentionally done to the young couple by the King, and in this special plea he perceived a merciful consideration towards the Earl of Essex, who, if it were sustained, would not be prevented from marrying again. How he justified his position to his own pure mind must remain a secret; but that he found some adequate justification is certain, and for a man of the calibre of Andrewes only an Andrewes can sit as judge. The Commission began its session in June, but by midsummer-day its members had got but little nearer a conclusion. Neile, after his wont, played a double game: while he professed to support Abbot he was in reality currying favour with James, and belying one who trusted him implicitly behind his back. The King, impatient to see the end of a matter upon which he had long ago made up his august mind, sent for Abbot privately, and strove to reduce him to submission by the power of his arguments. But when he found his archbishop firm, James, as usual, began to give way, and so left a false impression that though he desired the nullity he did not earnestly desire it.³

In the meantime the most extravagant reports were spread about the Court of the King's dealing with Abbot.

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 805.

² *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 806.

³ *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 809.

Some recalled the case of Archbishop Grindal, who had been overthrown by his opposition to the divorce of Dr. Julio. Suffolk, whose interest was engaged, openly remonstrated with him for delaying the business, while others said that the King "had in two letters so schooled the archbishop as he was never schooled in his life."¹ On the second of July, 1613, the Commissioners met once more, and Sir Daniel Donne, a man of no principle but self-interest, who had been pre-instructed by those of the Commissioners who favoured the nullity, asked leave to give his reasons at once. He was, he urged, an old man, and, having to attend the King during his progress, he must meet him at Farnham, and it would be a serious trouble to him to be compelled to come back and speak to the point. Leave being given for the next day, he delivered a carefully digested speech containing six lines of argument, such as he could only have derived from a conference with those who thought with him, or even from James himself.² His precedents were so bad, and his partiality so flagrant, that Abbot's position was rendered well-nigh intolerable; and when the King sent for the Commissioners to Windsor a few days afterwards, he begged to be released from his difficult post. How could he, an unmarried man, he pleaded, judge fitly in such matters?³ But James could be obstinate as well as his archbishop, with this difference, that he was usually most obstinate when he was most in the wrong. Besides, he had a hearty respect for Abbot, and he knew what a justification for the proceedings it would be if he had the support of such a man. All the satisfaction that the archbishop could get was to find that his royal master was deeply engaged to support the nullity.

As it was, a bare majority of the Commissioners was opposed to the divorce, and on the eighteenth of September Thomas Bilson, bishop of Winchester, and John Buckeridge, bishop of Rochester, were added to the Commission. That they had been tampered with through the instrumentality of Neile is certain, and they took their seats with the determination to add their voices to those of the minority.⁴ Thus James, who prided himself upon his impartial justice, not merely packed the bench appointed to decide the question at issue, but empowered a

¹ *State Trials*, pp. 809, 810.

² *Idem*, Vol. II. pp. 814, 815.

³ *Idem*, Vol. II. pp. 810-813.

⁴ *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 816.

bare majority to vote as he would have them. Nay, if Abbot had not misunderstood the tenor of the Commission, as it was now altered, a quorum of five were to be able to settle the matter in the teeth of a majority of seven. With a growing dislike of a business conducted upon lines unjust in themselves, and subject to the control of a majority, which had already made up its mind, Abbot once more passionately, but unsuccessfully, prayed to be released from his invidious post as president of the Commission. He addressed his reasons at some length to the King ; but unfortunately he confined himself to theological arguments and not to the plain statement of the merits of the case. Thus he gave a handle to the sword of Divinity, which it must be confessed that James wielded with no small skill, and his reasons were utterly demolished by the royal answer.¹ As has been said, the Commissioners, with their additional members, met on the eighteenth of September. To shake Abbot's decision, the King's answer had not been delivered to him until the previous day, and that night he had little sleep. He reflected that his fidelity to conscience might even cost him his life. But he comforted himself with earnest prayer and the thought "that poverty, imprisonment, death itself, were things contemptible to a resolved mind : that some of his predecessors, as Archbishop Cranmer, and Grindal, had given good examples of these sufferings, and were recorded in the catalogue of the righteous."² Moreover, it was currently reported that another husband was waiting until the nullity should set Lady Essex free, namely Viscount Rochester ;³ and the news of Overbury's suspicious end had just reached the archbishop.⁴

Troubled as he was in mind, Abbot was none the less firmly resolved to do his duty, come what might ; and the bishop of London stood by him, though he had a wife and many children. When the Commissioners met, Neile, with more honesty than could have been expected from him, proposed that Essex should be recalled ; but on the following Monday he came from the Court with the message that James would not suffer any such course, and there could be no longer any doubt in the minds of the Commissioners of the direction in which the King's

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 794-802.

² *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 821.

³ *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 818. Carr was so created on April 9th, 1611.

⁴ *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 821.

will inclined. Those, then, who opposed him were compelled to decide upon one of two courses. They must either obey the King and suffer the reproaches of their conscience, or they must obey their conscience and face the King's wrath. On the following Friday morning Abbot went to Whitehall, and when James asked him about the case, he once more endeavoured to dissuade his Majesty from any further meddling therein, but without success. James, who was something of a gossip, made the private business of his favourites his own, and in the present case he was backing the interests of his supreme favourite Rochester. Abbot did, however, succeed in convincing the King that he was acting in accordance with the dictates of his conscience, and probably he would have shaken the royal resolution, had not other influences succeeded his interview. When his faithful servant had retired, James did him the honour of sending him a series of arguments penned by some hungry scrivener, which Abbot read carefully; but he found them utterly futile, and such as a mere child in legal matters could have refuted. He returned sadly home to prepare a speech,¹ which he intended to deliver before the sentence was given on the morrow. He has preserved the substance of what he would have said, and his arguments are conclusive, upright, and straightforward. Nay, there can be little doubt that had they been delivered as intended, they would have intensified the difficulty of those who had made up their minds before the trial to vote for the nullity.

On the twenty-fifth of September the Commissioners held their final meeting. They were delayed for some time by the lateness of Bilson, who came straight from the Court, where James had been giving him directions as to the course of procedure. This bishop throughout the trial had conducted himself with great rudeness to Abbot. The reason of his behaviour soon became apparent; the courtiers who favoured the nullity had tampered with his honesty, and his judgment had been bought. Knowing that this was the last day of the session of the Commission, Abbot had brought his speech with him, and he was determined to make one more appeal on the side of truth and right. But Sir Julius Cæsar prevented its delivery. He informed the Court that the King had sent Sir Thomas Lake to hasten matters, and that it was his

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 822-836.

Majesty's wish that the Commissioners should merely express their opinion by *Yea* or *Nay* without giving their reasons. In this James acted wisely from his own point of view: he knew that the arguments for the divorce were weak, and he feared that the divorce itself would not be granted, if the reasons against it were stated at their full strength. When the matter came to the vote, Bishops Andrewes, Bilson, Buckeridge and Neile voted for the nullity, while Archbishop Abbot and Bishop King voted against it. The lawyers were equally divided: the affirmative side was taken by the three knights, Sir Julius Cæsar, Sir Thomas Parry and Sir Daniel Donne, while the three doctors, Dr. John Bennet, Dr. Thomas Edwards and Dr. Francis James, to their lasting honour, voted in the negative.¹ So the Commission dissolved and the divorce was granted, on the true reasons for which time was to shed a lurid light within the short space of two years.

The various Commissioners received their stipulated rewards; Bilson's son was knighted, and ever afterwards he bore the invidious nickname of Sir Nullity Bilson. Furthermore, the bishop's son-in-law refused to live with him lest he should take away his wife. The shifty Neile secured that degree of Court favour for which he had angled with much craft and dissimulation. But King and Abbot became the most popular men in the country. The people honoured the archbishop with their reverent respect during his later disgraces. Here they felt was one who would do justly in the teeth of royal displeasure and in the certainty of loss of station and influence. He had stood firm in a crisis which would have shaken many a man, and he received the honour of all honest men.² Of the part which Andrewes played in this unsavoury business, enough has been already said, and no further vindication of him will be attempted.³ Abbot was manifestly astonished that a scholar of his learning and a man of his pure and saintly character should have taken no part in the discussion of the evidence, and still more at the conclusion to which he came. So by a majority of two, in the face of plain justice, the guilty Countess, who had recently added the crime of murder to the sin of adultery, was set free to marry her no less guilty partner in both of these heinous offences.⁴ That the pair of crimi-

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 804. ² Weldon, *Court and Character of King James*, p. 76. ³ *Vide supra*, p. 174. ⁴ *Vide infra*, pp. 179, 180.

nals had little time to enjoy their legalised intercourse was only natural from their participation in a great crime, which was destined in the end to come to light, and the present conduct of Abbot to be fully justified. But in the meantime the full blaze of Court favour shone upon them. Within a few months Rochester, an open adulterer and an almost certain murderer, was raised to the Earldom of Somerset, and on Sunday, December 26th, he was married to the divorced woman, whose name had become a by-word throughout the Court.

But the archbishop's annoyances were not over yet. He had to suffer the decline of the favour of a King who could not perceive the value of an honest servant, when by good hap he had chosen such an one. In addition to this mortification, he was subjected to the ill offices of Neile, who did all that he could to bring him under the King's displeasure. First this wily prelate caused the certificate of sentence to be drawn in such a manner as to make all the Commissioners accessory to it. But Abbot was not to be caught in so transparent a trap as this, and when the matter had been set right, Neile attempted to do him further damage by inducing James to ask him for a licence for the marriage of Somerset and his paramour in the Chapel Royal.¹ But on this point Abbot stood as firmly by his guns as he had stood throughout the previous proceedings. He saw at once that the mere granting of such a licence would commit him to the approval of a sentence which he loathed with all his soul; and he represented to Neile his difficulties in the matter with a single-hearted man's confidence.² The wily bishop promised to report him faithfully to the King, but basely slandered him behind his back. He went so far as to insinuate that the primate intended to call in question the whole of the proceedings, and so deliberately to thwart the marriage on which the King had set his mind. James was not unnaturally seriously angry, and considerably alarmed. He had seen what a stubborn man the archbishop was, when he felt that he was on the side of right, and he may have feared that his own grossly unjust conduct in the matter would miss its evil reward.

But Neile had been playing his own game, and a more untruthful report of Abbot's conversation with him could hardly have been presented to the royal ears. The pri-

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 834, 835.

² *Idem*, Vol. II. pp. 839-844.

mate had merely referred James to the proper authority for giving the required licence, which was vested in the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and had endeavoured to persuade him through Neile to cause banns to be put up in the ordinary way. But truth when it is twisted by an unscrupulous trickster is often turned into the gravest kind of falsehood ; and Abbot, by his fidelity to conscience, drew down upon himself the wrath of a King whose moral perceptions were of the bluntest order, he incurred the malevolent machinations of a crafty, lying and utterly discreditable bishop, and he forfeited Court favour to the end of his life. James never again loved and trusted him to the same extent as in former times. His pride was wounded to find that his archbishop was a juster man than himself, and his theological vanity was insulted by the fact that his arguments had failed to convince one of whom he had made sure, and upon whose good opinion he set some store. Thus " Abbot, to his everlasting fame, mainly opposed all the proceedings, for which he ever after lived in disgrace, excluded from the Council-table, and died in disgrace with the King on earth, though in favour with the King of kings." ¹ So Weldon sums up the archbishop's character, who has doubtless exaggerated the extent of his disgrace, and who has forgotten in this place the casual homicide, which it was his misfortune to commit. The fact that he died in disfavour in the reign of Charles I. has nothing to do with this episode of Abbot's career, but was the direct consequence of the underhand machinations of Laud and the open animosity of the Duke of Buckingham. But for all that Abbot stood true to himself, when few would have followed his example, and when a holier than he would seem to have fallen, and James' treatment of his true and upright servant must always redound to the discredit of that slipshod moralist.

In 1615 his influence with the King was still sufficient to enable the primate to raise his brother Robert to the see of Salisbury, a preferment which he did not, however, enjoy long. The same year he performed a service to George Villiers, afterwards Duke of Buckingham, which cost him the small remains of his consideration at Court. Perceiving the King's growing hatred of Somerset after the odious crime for which he had ventured to pardon

¹ Weldon, *Court and Character of King James*, p. 76.

him, Abbot cast his eyes about for another to take the place of the fallen favourite in his royal master's affections. It chanced at that time that George Villiers, a young man of exceedingly engaging manners and a singularly handsome person, had just returned from the Continent, whither he had been sent by a fond mother to acquire the graces of the French Court. The archbishop's choice in an evil hour fell upon him, and he presented the youth to the Queen, that she might recommend him to her lord. James had great confidence in the judgment of his wife, and he received none who had not passed her scrutiny into immediate attendance upon his person. With shrewd penetration Anne strove to dissuade Abbot from lending a helping hand to Villiers. Nay, she went so far as to say of the young man, "My lord, you and the rest of your friends know not what to do: I know your master better than you all. For if this young man be once brought in, the first persons that he will plague must be you that labour for him. Yea, I shall have my part also; the King will teach him to despise and hardly intreat us all, that he may seem beholden to none but himself."¹ In after years the prophetic words of the Queen rang in the ears of the archbishop, when he was old and feeble, and when the very man whom he had helped to rise, and who had risen as few Court favourites have been able to do, turned into his bitter enemy, because he had too much dignity and self-respect to pay him court. In this respect it must be admitted that Abbot shines by comparison with Laud, who never shrank from stooping to flatter the lord paramount of the court, that he might gain his own will through his instrumentality. Queen Anne knew her husband's selfish character in regard to those whom he favoured, and she showed too that she could read the disposition of George Villiers with striking accuracy.

Two years before these dark events in 1613, shortly after the suspicious death of Prince Henry, to the great joy of the English Protestants, James had had the good sense to marry his daughter Elizabeth to a Prince of their way of thinking. Unfortunately his choice of a bridegroom was not so good as that bridegroom's religion. Frederick, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, was in every way a rash and feeble creature, who kicked his crown from his

¹ Frankland, *Annals of James I., etc.*, p. 224.

own head, and left his wife and children to be supported by another. Seven years later Matthias, the Emperor of Austria, died, and Ferdinand, King of Bohemia, was elected to the vacant throne; whereupon the estates of Bohemia chose Frederick to be their King. Frederick at once modestly consulted his father-in-law as to whether or not he should accept the proffered crown; but, as it appeared later, he had not the slightest intention of waiting for the wise advice of the British Solomon. The consequences of this supremely imprudent proceeding were seen in the almost immediate outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, which ruined Frederick himself and did irreparable damage to the Protestant cause in Europe. James was not unjustly incensed at the neglect of his royal dignity and his invaluable wisdom.¹ Moreover, he was busied at this time in the foolish design of a match between his surviving son Charles and the Infanta of Spain. Hence he virtually threw his son-in-law overboard, leaving him to shift for himself until it was too late to help him efficiently. Abbot, who had performed and rejoiced in the marriage between Frederick and Elizabeth, both headed the opposition to the Spanish match, and eagerly supported the policy, if such it can be called, of the weak-witted Elector, urging the need of sending immediate assistance to him. In this he spoke the wishes of every man in the nation with the exception of the Papists, though he finally estranged from himself the affections of the foolish old King.

But in this, as in other matters, Abbot cared only to do faithfully what he felt to be his plain duty, and there can be no doubt now that he was right in both of his pleas. Realizing with fatal clearness that Spain was a Catholic power, and that the marriage of the heir apparent to the throne of England with a Catholic princess would lay the country open to the invasion of a crowd of turbulent priests, he fought strenuously in the Council and from his place in the House of Lords to bring about a change for the better in the King's policy. His letter to Secretary Naunton, begging him to induce James to send speedy aid to the unlucky Elector, before the Palatinate was irretrievably lost, shows how anxious he was to serve the Protestant cause and his master's credit as the Euro-

¹ Rushworth Abridged (1703), Vol. I. pp. 4-10.

pean champion of Protestantism.¹ But he won the usual thanks of those who are wise before their time, and he only succeeded in incurring the King's odium without furthering his object in the least. That James's cowardice on the one hand and the malevolence of the Duke of Buckingham on the other led to the heartless desertion of the Elector and the disgrace of Abbot is a commonplace of history. But the archbishop deserves full credit for his keen insight into public affairs; and his resolute opposition to his master at a time when such opposition was fraught with grave danger cannot but exalt him in the opinion of wiser men than many of the contemporary critics. It may be that his heart was with Protestantism; but that does not detract from the soundness of his judgment. He saw the evil results which must accrue from the Court policy and the King's desire for peace at any price, and he did not hesitate to throw in the weight of his personal power with the mass of the nation.

Despite the stubborn opposition of the wisest of his councillors, James pursued the monstrous plan of his old age with a tenacity peculiarly Scottish, and he viewed with strong and growing displeasure all who could not see eye to eye with him. Villiers, by this time Marquess of Buckingham, perceiving the drift of the King's fancy, like a prudent youth who cared more for his own interest than for the good of his country, fell in with it without scruple, and did his best to bring matters to a successful conclusion. As he came into the foreground, his first friend and earliest patron receded further and further into the background, and in July, 1621, a circumstance befel Abbot which tended still more to weaken his influence at Court. On the twenty-fourth of the same month he was hunting in Bramshill Park, the estate of his friend Lord Zouch, in the county of Hampshire, when, "pretending to be a woodsman, he took a cross-bow to make a shot at a buck. One of the keepers did his office to wind-less up the deer to his stand, who too suddenly shot at a fair-headed buck in the herd. But his arrow meeting a small bough in the way, was cast a little from the mark, and by an unhappy glance wounded the keeper in the arm. It was but a flesh-wound, and a slight one; yet being under the cure of an heedless surgeon, the fellow

¹ *Cabbala* (1663), pp. 108, 109; Frankland, *Annals*, p. 42; and many other places.

died of it the next day.”¹ Such are the circumstances of this accident, which cast a dark shadow over the archbishop’s declining years. Penetrated with deep sorrow, he at once retired to the fine almshouse with which he had endowed his native town of Guildford some years before, and there awaited his sentence in an agony of remorse.

When James himself heard of the sad mischance, he is said to have exclaimed, “An angel might have miscarried in that part.” But, angel or not, Abbot’s estate was forfeit to the King for casual homicide, though in this matter James showed himself to be filled with the natural sympathies of his own kindly nature, as well as of one who was a keen sportsman. He at once wrote with his own hand to the unfortunate archbishop, “that he would not add affliction to his sorrow, nor take one farthing from his chattels and moveables, which were confiscated by our civil penalties.” At the same time there could be no doubt that the archbishop had been rendered uncanonical by his accident, and Williams, the Lord Keeper, who, though he was parson, prebendary, dean and bishop all in one, cannot be acquitted of having a keen eye to the primacy, wrote off post haste to the Marquess of Buckingham, on the twenty-seventh of July, a letter, which gives the following account of the mischance and of its consequences:—“My most noble lord. An unfortunate occasion of my lord’s Grace, his killing of a man casually (as it is here constantly reported), is the cause of my seconding my yesterday’s letter unto your lordship. His Grace (upon this accident) is by the Common Law of England to forfeit all his estate unto his Majesty, and by the Canon Law (which is in force with us) irregular *ipso facto*, and so suspended from all ecclesiastical functions, until he be again restored by his superior, which (I take it) is the King’s Majesty, in this rank and order of ecclesiastical jurisdictions. If you send for Dr. Lamb, he will

¹ Heylin, *Laud*, pp. 80–82; Hacket, *Life of Williams* (1693), pp. 65–68; Fuller, *Church History* (1655), Book X. pp. 87, 88, Book XI. pp. 127, 128; Clarendon, *Great Rebellion* (1702), Vol. I. pp. 68, 69; Lloyd, *Statesmen of England* (1665), pp. 522, 523; and many other in some respects contradictory accounts, which have as far as possible been harmonised here. It may be noted that Heylin shows a tendency to be waggish in a matter which does not call for such a display of humour; Hacket strives to exalt the conduct of Williams, while Clarendon makes the most of the mischance in his dislike of Abbot.

acquaint your lordship with the distinct penalties in this kind. I wish, with all my heart, his Majesty would be as merciful as ever he was in all his life; but yet I held it my duty to let his Majesty know, by your lordship, that his Majesty is fallen upon a matter of great advice and deliberation. To add affliction to the afflicted (as no doubt he is in mind) is against the King's nature; to leave *virum sanguineum*, or a man of blood, primate and patriarch of all his churches, is a thing that sounds very harsh in the old Councils and Canons of the Church." ¹

That Williams, in spite of the sympathetic tone of his letter, had an ulterior object in view than merely to show kindness to Abbot, can be doubtful to no one who has carefully followed that wily prelate's somewhat tortuous career. At this time, with one exception, he held within his grasp every possible piece of ecclesiastical preferment. In the political world he was Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and friendly for the nonce with Buckingham. Thus he was powerful alike in Church and State, and he had only one further object of his insatiable ambition, the mitre of Canterbury. That his fellow-bishops and some at least of the statesmen of his day quite understood his aims, though they were wrapped in a decent veil of kindly sympathy, seems tolerably certain. They had seen how zealously he had worked to secure his own interest, and how softly he had feathered his own nest; nor were they ignorant of the influence which his smooth tongue had given him over the old King, and as far as they were concerned, they were not minded to help him to this last and highest piece of preferment.² They might neither love nor admire Abbot, but they distrusted and hated Williams. It is therefore vain for Hackett³ to represent the Lord Keeper's letter as merely written in the overflowing kindness of his dove-like disposition. It may have been so; but the balance of probabilities does not incline in that direction. Williams's most fervent admirer cannot deny that he showed an almost indecent haste in informing the all-powerful favourite, and through him the King, his master, of the consequences of Abbot's disaster; and though he expressed a hope that James would exercise supreme mercy, he never hinted at the possibility of immediate restoration. In no case can he be acquitted of

¹ *Cabbala* (1663), p. 284.

² Heylin, *Laud*, pp. 81, 82.

³ *Life of Williams*, p. 66.

a strong desire to keep himself well to the fore with the powers that were, in case the luckless primate were suspended or deprived.

But whatever were the hidden motives of the wily Lord Keeper, the King took him at his word, more literally than perhaps he may have wished, in respect of the exercise of mercy. As has been seen, he at once remitted the forfeiture of Abbot's goods, and like a true sportsman he expressed his profound sympathy with a brother in distress. But the King's kindness could not make the archbishop canonical; and until James had made up his mind to act as head of the Church, Abbot was virtually suspended from all ecclesiastical authority. Such a case, which is single in the annals of the English Church, required time for consideration, and James by his disposition was never averse from delay. The difficulty of originating a precedent was so great, that he must often have sat in council with his intimates, before he could determine on a proper course of action. In the meantime Abbot was spending his days in repentant retirement in his own almshouse at Guildford,¹ overwhelmed by sorrow for his hard fate, yet anxious to know what was to be done with him. But it was not until the third of October in the same year that the King issued the order of his commission of inquiry to the bishops of London, Winchester, Rochester, St. Davids, Exeter, and to Sir Henry Hubbard, Justice Doddridge, Sir Henry Marten (the eminent civilian and father of the notorious regicide), Dr. Steward, and the Lord Keeper. Of these any six, including always the Lord Keeper and the bishops of London, Winchester and St. David's, were to form a quorum. Thus it will be seen that amongst Abbot's judges two might not unnaturally be expected to be hostile to him, namely Andrewes and Laud, Williams as usual was playing for his own hand, while Dr. Steward and Sir Henry Marten, who owed their promotion to his good offices, were of course his partisans.²

The tenor of the King's Commission was as follows: "It is not unknown to you what hath happened the last summer to our trusty and well beloved councillor, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, who shooting at a deer with a cross-bow in Bramshill Park, did with that shot

¹ Fuller, *Church History* (1655), Book X., p. 88.

² *Cabbala*, p. 279.

casually give the keeper a wound, whereof he died. Which accident (though it might have happened to any other man, yet) because his eminent rank and function in the Church hath (as we are informed) ministered occasion of some doubt, as making the cause different in his person, in respect of the scandal (as is supposed), we being desirous (as it is fit we should) to be satisfied therein, and reposing especial trust in your learnings and judgments, have made choice of you to inform us concerning the nature of this cause, and do therefore require you to take presently into your considerations the scandal that may arise thereupon, and to certify us what in your judgments the same may amount unto, either to an irregularity or otherwise. And, lastly, what means may be found for the redress thereof (if need be); of all which points we shall expect to have your reports with what diligence and expedition you may. Dated at Theobald's, October 3, 1621." ¹ The King's anxiety at the same time to do strict justice to Abbot and to avoid needlessly wounding his already lacerated feelings, may be clearly seen from the words set in parentheses in the foregoing. These creditable motives had detained him a considerable time from coming to a conclusion as to the proper course to adopt. Being undecided himself, he wisely sought the advice of his bishops and of one or two men learned in ecclesiastical law. That Andrewes was James's own choice, as Laud was that of Buckingham, may be taken as certain; and there can be little doubt that Abbot, when he heard of the presence of these two men amongst his judges, gave himself up for lost. That he judged correctly of Laud and incorrectly of Andrewes will appear in due course; but his mistake was only natural in one who was looking out for friends from any quarter.

The members of the Commission met early in October, and many points of ecclesiastical law were raised and hotly debated amongst them, so that no conclusion was reached until the end of the month. The first point in discussion was whether involuntary homicide made the primate irregular. Andrewes, with the lay-commissioners, decided in the negative, while Laud, as might have been expected from one of his peculiar views on Church government, with the rest of the bishops, decided in the affirmative. The next question which arose was whether

¹ *Cabbala*, p. 279.

that act might or might not tend to scandal in a Churchman; and again there was a difference of opinion, Andrewes, after the gentleness of his nature, inclining to the more generous side. The third and last point in dispute was how the archbishop could be restored to his former dignity. Upon this knotty point Andrewes, supported by Sir Henry Hubbard, or Hobart, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and Dr. Steward, recommended that the King, as head of the Church, should do it directly as an act of grace. Williams and the rest of the bishops, with an eye to the maintenance of their own privileges, desired that the matter should take the form of absolution at the hands of an episcopal commission. Judge Doddridge and Sir Henry Marten (Dean of the Arches), with true legal caution, proposed that both methods should be adopted. The final decision of the question was left to James, who "took the shortest course to mercy," and by his broad seal he assoiled the archbishop "from all irregularity, scandal, or infamation, pronouncing him to be capable to use all metropolitan authority, as if that sinistrous contingency in spilling blood had never been done."¹

Abbot, thus freed in the most complete and distinguished manner from the bitter fruits of his sad fortune, was restored to his proper dignity, and James's justice cannot but be commended in the whole matter. But some of the later bishops on their appointment, or translation, refused to be consecrated by one who had shed blood, however unwittingly. The archbishop returned to his wonted jurisdiction, and made an allowance to the widow of the keeper, Peter Pawkins, so long as he himself lived. She, however, speedily found consolation in a second marriage, a circumstance which did not cut off Abbot's bounty. It is interesting to notice the conduct of the various Commissioners throughout the proceedings. Andrewes from beginning to end, though parted by mutual dislike from his superior, leaned to the side of mercy, and his wise and generous judgment in the end prevailed. Williams, who had been so loud in his expressions of sympathy with the culprit, voted against the easier method of settling the difficulty on each occasion. Can it be doubted that he had a covetous eye to Abbot's shoes, a view of his

¹ Hacket, *Life of Williams*, p. 68; Fuller, *Church History*, Book X., pp. 87, 88.

conduct which is further supported by the fact that he refused to be consecrated by him on his translation to the see of Lincoln? Laud too voted in the main with Williams, though he had no respect for that astute politician's character, but certainly not from similar motives. A stickler for exact ecclesiastical discipline, there can be no doubt that he was not consciously influenced by his animosity to Abbot, but that he was really convinced that the primate was irregular. Nor had Laud any reason to love Abbot, who had succeeded in keeping him out of the Court of High Commission upon more than one occasion; but any bias, which such treatment might have given to him, must be set down as unconscious, for Laud was scrupulously just according to his lights.¹

That this unfortunate episode in his career drew Abbot nearer to James for a time is certain. The King had his faults and his prejudices; nay, he had a plentiful crop of each; but cruelty was not amongst his vices, and he sincerely pitied the man who suffered so acutely from an evil chance which might have been his own. But Abbot was too unyielding and too conscientious a man to retain Court favour long in opposition to the great favourite and to the King's known wishes. He never flinched in his attempt to overthrow the Spanish match, with the natural result that he had more influence with the Parliament and with the people than with James himself. By this attitude, too, he seems to have alienated Charles, who for a time at least was as determined to marry a Spanish princess as was his father that he should. An illustration of the archbishop's fearless opposition to the royal wishes may be seen in his prohibition of the reading of the *Declaration of Sports* at Croydon, where he happened to be present. So, too, he promoted many lecturers of a Puritan cast of thought, who were neither grateful to the King nor to the Prince. As he grew older the manners of the man grew more and more austere and retiring, and his ailments of stone and gravel and similar diseases contributed to make him less regular at the council-table than either his office or his own private requirements demanded.² He was the last man to consult his own advantage, and though his rule of discipline might not commend itself to stricter theologians, there can be little

¹ *Cabbala*, p. 115.

² Frankland, *Annals*, p. 213.

doubt that his moderation was the result of serious conviction. So he allowed other men, and among them the bitterest of all of his foes, to step into the place, which was his own by right, and thus hastened his downfall in the succeeding reign. Ill as he was, at the time when James was gathered to his fathers, he was yet strong enough to set the crown on the head of his successor, though we can imagine that his function upon that solemn occasion would be extremely distasteful to Charles and to many of the bishops.¹

With the accession of Charles and the practically regal power of the Duke of Buckingham, the archbishop's difficulties increased. He had refused to stoop to the favourite's insolence, a defect which the latter was slow neither to perceive nor to revenge. An opportunity only was wanted, and an opportunity soon presented itself. One Robert Sibthorpe, "who not being so much as a Bachelor of Arts, as it hath been credibly reported unto me," says Abbot, "by means of Dr. Pierce, Dean of Peterborough, being Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, did get to be conferred upon him the title of Doctor." The said Sibthorpe was Vicar of Brackley, in Northamptonshire, and holder of a benefice in Buckinghamshire, and he first forced his way into notoriety, when Charles attempted to raise money by a loan, without the consent or even the calling of a Parliament, to cover the expenses of an expedition on behalf of the French Protestants, who were being closely besieged in Rochelle by Richelieu. Desiring promotion, on February 22, 1627, he preached a sermon, declaring in plain terms that every subject who refused to pay the loan was in danger of damnation. Such a view of the royal prerogative was very welcome to Charles at a time when he was disgusted with Parliaments and when his treasury was empty. He therefore despatched William Murray, a gentleman of the bed-chamber, a worthy messenger upon a worthy errand, to the archbishop, requiring him to license the aforesaid sermon for printing. Abbot read the sermon, as befitted his care in such matters, and sent a message to the King, pointing out that it was not fit to be printed. His objections were in part logical and in part constitutional; but Charles was obstinately bent upon pursuing his tyrannical course, and failed to appreciate either the archbishop's constitu-

¹ Sanderson, *The Reign of King Charles*, pp. 21-28.

tionalism or his logic. The same message was sent by the same messenger, to whom Abbot, who could not wait upon the King from the severity of his gout, returned the same answer. This stubborn rectitude was calculated to set Charles into a fierce passion, so that he sent a threat "that if the archbishop did not despatch the matter, he would take some other way with him."¹

In the meantime Laud was deputed to answer Abbot's objections, which shows that the King himself had felt their force. That Abbot's opponent would proceed to his task with right good will is certain, but whether he succeeded in convincing those who were expected to pay the loan of the truth of his reply, is quite another question. Soon afterwards, on a Sunday, Murray, armed with Laud's answer, was sent to Lambeth, where he found the primate suffering from acute pain from the stone. With considerable courtesy he offered to return on the morrow. With the morrow he came back, and found Abbot still in bed ill. The archbishop requested his unwelcome visitor to leave him the paper that he might answer it at his leisure, when he was sufficiently recovered to go into his study. This indulgence the King's messenger could not grant, having received strict injunctions not to let the sacred paper go out of his fingers. Abbot's dignity was wounded by this insulting method of treating the highest officer of the Church, and he firmly but respectfully refused to license the obnoxious sermon. That he was quite justified in his position may be seen from the fact that Dr. Worrall, in his capacity of chaplain to Montague, Bishop of London, was on the point of licensing the sermon. But either from some doubts, or acting upon the good advice of his friends, he consulted John Selden, the most learned lawyer of his day. Selden, who had promised to give his answer in writing, after reading the document, shrank from giving a written opinion of its contents. Sending for Dr. Worrall on the next day, he said characteristically, "What have you done? You have allowed a strange book yonder, which, if it be true, there is no *meum* or *tuum*, no man in England hath anything of his own; if ever the tide turn, and matters be called to a reckoning, you will be hanged for publishing such a book." Whereupon the Doctor in some trepidation scratched out his signature, and left it to his bishop to license, who did so

¹ Frankland, *Annals*, p. 215.

after its most objectionable phrases had been slightly corrected by Laud.¹

That the Court party sympathised with Sibthorpe's teaching is certain ; the King had begun to perceive that any Parliament would demand concessions before it chose to grant supplies, and Buckingham urged him on in his perilous course. Moreover, the favourite saw that now or never was the time to avenge himself upon the sturdy independence of a man who resolutely refused to do him homage. The King himself was highly exasperated by Abbot's manly conduct in this affair, though if he had had a spark of justice in his nature, he must have respected one who had dared to resist him at no small risk to himself. Laud, too, who regarded Abbot's gentle moderation as a betrayal of the Church into the hands of a turbulent set of heretical rebels, would have long been filling Charles's ears with doleful and exaggerated stories of the archbishop's fatal laxity, and of its evil effects upon the national welfare. So that on more grounds than one the King was moved to take an extreme step and sequester his strongest opponent from his archiepiscopal functions. A more unwise step could hardly have been taken in the interests of the loan. Abbot was at once raised to a position of unrivalled popularity, while the loan itself was looked upon as the extortionate exaction of arbitrary power. But Charles never saw a hair's breadth beyond the needs of the moment, nor were Buckingham and Laud one whit further-sighted in such matters. He therefore commanded Abbot to retire to his house at Forde, in Kent, and gave over his ecclesiastical functions to Thomas Montague, Bishop of London ; Neile, Bishop of Durham ; and Laud, now Bishop of Bath and Wells, with two other bishops.² Such an extreme, not to say insulting, degradation was not likely to conciliate its victim, or the nation, which looked upon him as the sturdy champion of its liberties. But Abbot's enemies were not able long to prevail against him, and he was restored to his duties and to his place in Parliament after a few months of compulsory retirement, in March, 1628. The Parliament, indeed, refused to sit without him, and Charles, who wanted money, was forced to yield. Such treatment of a man old and infirm was unworthy alike of the King and his imprudent

¹ Frankland, *Annals*, pp. 213-218, especially p. 218.

² *Idem*, pp. 211, 212.

advisers ; but they took little from their severity, and the loan was a complete failure.¹

Fuller,² by some mistake of information or error of judgment, ascribes Abbot's suspension to the casual homicide of the year 1621. But in the Commission itself not a word is uttered concerning this ; nor, indeed, could it have been alleged as a reason, since James had already fully absolved him from all guilt in the matter. The cause assigned was his incapacity by age and infirmity of discharging his duties. But even so, it was acting with extreme want of generosity and most arbitrary unkindness to suspend an old man, highly-placed in the Church, who could not have many years to live. Lord Conway, then Secretary of State, was instructed to bear the unwelcome and insulting message to the aged primate, who complained, as he justly might, that he had been treated with gross unfairness. He had been condemned unheard ; but he sent no remonstrance, but only a dignified submission. He took comfort that his suspension was in the main due to his refusal to license Sibthorpe's sermon, and not to any breath of treason, or other misdemeanour.³ So he retired to Forde in a happier frame of mind than his persecutors, who could not but feel, the King excepted, that they had been guilty of a great wrong shabbily committed. During his retirement Abbot, as was his wont, kept open house ; but there is no truth in the accusation brought against him, that his house was a Cave of Adullam for the gathering of restless and rebellious spirits.⁴ That his loyalty remained unstained is beyond question ; but from this time to the end of his life he took little part in public affairs.

His suspension began on the fifth of July, 1627, and ended towards the close of March, 1628, during which time his devout piety was of much assistance to him in the alleviation of the pangs of unjust disgrace.⁵ His popularity with the gentlemen of Kent, which had always been great, was much increased by his sufferings, which seem to have been patiently, if a little sullenly, borne. His

¹ Frankland, *Annals*, pp. 282, 283 ; Heylin, *Laud*, pp. 158, 159.

² Fuller, *Church History*, Bk. XI. pp. 127, 128.

³ Frankland, *Annals*, *Abbot's Narrative*, p. 219.

⁴ Heylin, *Laud*, pp. 229-231.

⁵ Frankland, *Annals*, p. 224. *Vide* also the whole account, which occupies pp. 213-224.

lavish hospitality endeared him to these and to others, while his quiet dignity, both before and after his confinement, won him a high place in the hearts of the people. The touching prayer with which he concludes the manuscript narrative, which he penned not to justify himself to others, but to content himself, may well be quoted. "Praying to God," he says, "to bless and guide the King aright; to continue the prosperity and welfare of this kingdom, which at this time is shrewdly shaken; to send good and worthy men to be governors of our Church; to prosper my mind and body, that I may do nothing that may give a wound to my conscience; and then to send me patience quietly to endure whatsoever His Divine Majesty shall be pleased to lay upon me; *Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis*. And in the end give me such happy deliverance, either in life or in death, as may be most for His glory, and for the wholesome example of others, who look much upon the actions and passions of men in my place."¹ That these touching words could not have been uttered by a man tainted by any disloyalty, or guilty of any wilful carelessness of the welfare of the Church committed to his care, goes without saying; and the brave archbishop passed the tranquil months of his retirement without suffering any real disgrace in the eyes of worthy citizens, but a standing monument of disgrace to those who had hounded him from his place. Let Heylin² say what he will, and it must be admitted that he does say what he will with no common degree of prejudice, the quiet dignity of Abbot's unrepining submission to wanton insult and guiltless obloquy must always commend him to the sympathies of those of his countrymen who are capable of forming a just judgment of the history of the past.

That Charles himself, who never forgot a personal dislike, had early conceived almost a hatred of Abbot, may be seen from a curious story, which possesses the elements of probability, if not of truth. Heylin, who seldom paid attention to strict accuracy in such matters, has preserved the details, which are interesting in themselves, and throw a clear light upon the King's character. When "Prince Henry, His Majesty (that is Charles), then Duke of York, Archbishop Abbot, with many of the nobility, were waiting in the Privy Chamber for the coming out of King James,

¹ Frankland, *Annals*, p. 224.

² Heylin, *Laud*, pp. 228-231, *et passim*.

the prince, to put a jest upon the duke his brother, took the archbishop's square cap out of his hands, and put it on his brother's head, telling him that if he continued a good boy, and followed his book, he would one day make him Archbishop of Canterbury, which the child took in such disdain that he threw the cap upon the ground, and trampled it under his feet, not being without much difficulty and some force taken off that eagerness."¹ Truly, the "child was father of the man." The wiseacres of the time at once saw a presage in this act of childish folly of the young prince's ultimate sympathy with the Puritans to the prejudice of the Church. Never was a more foolish presentiment entertained about any matter; wiser men than those who put it forth might have seen the beginnings of a dislike to the grave carriage of the archbishop, such as a child might easily have felt. Charles may or may not have remembered his freak in later days, and the probabilities are that a King who set such store by trifles did remember it; but it is certain that under the influence of his headstrong councillors he grew more and more to dislike the unbending firmness with which Abbot opposed his rash attempts at despotism, and strove to save him from himself.

In the meantime the High Church divines preached their favourite doctrine of the King's absolute power, with the only result that they charmed his ear and sent him forth upon courses which led to his final ruin. They may have sought preferment by their preaching, or they may have really believed what they said; but they pulled down the Church about their heads. The royal officers strove in vain to exact the loan, which was levied upon the hypocritical pretence of being a voluntary contribution. But the people could not see it in this light, and they buttoned up their pockets with much resolution. Sibthorpe's sermon was of no assistance; the King's exactions were viewed as exactions to which he had no right, political or divine; and many gentlemen, such as Sir Walter Earl and Sir Edward Hampden, chose rather to go to prison than to pay an illegal contribution to unnecessary expenditure.² So firm and consistent was the opposition to Charles's policy, that in spite of himself and in

¹ Heylin, *Laud*, p. 229.

² Frankland, *Annals*, pp. 224-226; Rushworth, *Collections Abridged*, Vol. I. pp. 270-277.

direct violence to his own wishes, he was compelled to summon a Parliament in March, 1628, which wrung his assent to the Petition of Right. With the advent of the Parliament came the removal of Abbot's suspension; the House of Peers refused to sit without him, and the first use which he made of his recovered liberty was to take the side of patriotism against the unreasoning champions of the right divine. The Commons met in a fever of indignation against the Duke of Buckingham for his proved incapacity in the administration of public affairs, and his riotous luxury in private life. The policy of the loan was rightly or wrongly regarded as his alone, and the popular wrath provoked by its exaction was only increased by the not unwarranted suspicion that much of its proceeds would serve to minister to his wanton extravagance. Charles failed to understand the hatred of the people to his minister; if he pleased him, surely that was enough and more than enough for the mob. But he forgot that those who paid the piper had some right to call for the tune; and when the burthen of the tune was "Pay, pay; no Parliament, no Parliament, no Parliament," the people had some right to draw their purse-strings tighter. This at least was Sir John Elliot's view, who had been imprisoned in the Gatehouse of the Tower of London for his contumacy, but who was released along with other prisoners on this account when the Parliament met.¹

The temper, therefore, of the two Houses was even more stubborn than was usual, and a strong determination was shown both to shake off the domination of the Duke of Buckingham and to render all so-called voluntary loans impossible for the future. To secure the second of these desirable objects, the famous Petition of Right was drawn up, the provisions of which need not be repeated here; but they were drawn up in the interests of the tax-payers and to the diminution of the royal prerogative. On the twenty-fifth of April a Conference was held between the two Houses, at which Abbot, who had only just partially recovered from the evil effects of the King's displeasure, did not hesitate to speak openly in favour of a settlement of the matter in dispute, upon the lines proposed by the Commons. It required no ordinary boldness in a man old and feeble from many diseases, who was distrusted by the Court and disliked by the King, who was

¹ Frankland, *Annals*, p. 282.

known to be hated by the favourite and to be viewed as a Puritan by the most influential of the Court-clergy, to rise in his place and deliberately support such a measure as the Petition of Right. But Abbot was not a man to shrink from what he felt to be his plain duty. He might not see very far ahead, but he saw with unmistakable clearness the fundamental distinction between right and wrong, and he took his side unflinchingly to support the right.¹ This was almost his last public act, and posterity owes him a debt of gratitude for the strong part which he took in asserting the liberties of his own generation. From this time forth he exercised the full powers of his position, and on August 24th, 1628, he consecrated to the see of Chichester Richard Montague, who must have been appointed in opposition to his wishes. At this ceremony Abbot's old enemy, Laud, assisted,² a circumstance which may well be noted in passing, as pointing to the fact that the archbishop had not been suspended on the ground of irregularity, else it is very certain that Laud would not have joined with him in so sacred a matter.

Laud, who was now Bishop of London, daily exercised an increasing influence over the wavering mind of Charles; and he hurried his master into a premature conflict with the extreme reformers, from his own impatience of the moderate course pursued by Abbot. He hated the mass of the lecturers, who did not hesitate to denounce those Arminian views which were dear to him as life itself, and like most enthusiasts he was utterly incapable of seeing any good in those who were opposed to him. With a severe conviction that the "liberty of prophesying" was leading the Church into all manner of irregularities and confusions, as indeed was the fact, he induced the King, through the archbishop, to issue in December, 1629, certain directions in preaching which would strike at the heart of Puritanism in the Church. The lecturers were set under a special series of regulations, which if they had been fully carried out would either have thinned their numbers or reduced them effectually to silence. In the first place, they were only permitted to be chosen under certain rigid conditions; the place of their afternoon lectures was for the most part to be taken by catechetical

¹ Frankland, *Annals*, p. 282; Rushworth, *Collections Abridged*, Vol. I. p. 346.

² Heylin, *Laud*, p. 175.

instruction, and thus they would be deprived of their most valued privilege of spreading their views. Secondly, when they were chosen, they were to read the Liturgy before their lecture, and to perform that piece of ritual in the surplice, conditions which nine out of every ten of them would have promptly refused to obey. Thirdly, and this was the worst of all, their lectures were first to be supervised by a company of grave and orthodox divines; and lastly, all lecturers were to take a living so soon as they could procure one.¹ These regulations, which were conceived in the narrowest spirit of petty tyranny, would have completely destroyed the superior freedom enjoyed by those divines, whose scrupulous consciences prevented them from actually taking orders, yet who were doing loyal service to the highest interests of the land.

That Abbot disliked these regulations one and all, goes without saying; but his position obliged him to obey the King and to issue them to his clergy. His position, however, gave him an advantage which Laud had forgotten, and of which he was not slow to avail himself. Wherever he could, he softened the rigour of the new rules, and resolutely refused to persecute those Protestants who treated them with defiance. Nay more, when the dean and archdeacon of Canterbury had suspended Palmer and Udney of that diocese from their lectureships, because they would not comply with the royal regulations, he was not long in restoring them to their former positions. He had in his own person known the bitterness of suspension, and he could feel with those who were similarly treated, though, perhaps, with more justice than had been his fate. Furthermore, he traced the hand of Laud in the regulations, and he was not minded to suffer the dictation, so far as it could be legitimately avoided, of one of his own bishops. Heylin and others of Laud's friends speak of Abbot's clemency with much conscientious rancour; they could see as much of the Puritan in him as he perceived of the Papist in them, and they have not spared his memory. Heylin never shrank from abusing a dead man with much malicious venom, and though he is always interesting and piquant in his characterizations of his opponents, they must be taken as caricatures rather than as portraits. Those who have suffered from his malice and his incapacity to tell the exact truth of matters as

¹ Heylin, *Laud*, pp. 188-192. For Palmer and Udney, *v.* p. 190.

they occurred are a numerous and a distinguished band, whose works speak for themselves, and whose lives are remembered after them as examples to posterity. That Abbot should have had his enemies was inevitable; his strength of character was calculated to provoke the unmeasured wrath of those who felt the force of his opposition. Amongst his least scrupulous calumniators are Clarendon and Peter Heylin; but a close attention to facts shows that they magnified his faults and minimised his virtues to such an extent that his faults alone are commonly known, while his virtues have vanished before the strong wind of malicious misrepresentation.

Is it, then, possible to arrive at a just estimate of a man, whom his own Church for the most part scarcely understood, and who has been the recognised scape-goat amongst High Church authorities for the disasters which were mainly due to the unwisdom of Charles and the intemperate zeal and inconsiderate rashness of Laud? That Laud's vast learning and powerful personality have obscured the quieter and less obtrusive strength of his predecessor is obvious to all who will read the story of the events of the time, as it is told by the historians of the time, and without prejudice. That Abbot was a great archbishop cannot, perhaps, be truly asserted, but that he was culpably careless of the welfare of the Church is a wanton and malicious libel uttered by fierce partisans. It is useless to accuse him of neglecting his duties in this respect in the face of numberless facts to the contrary, and simply because Laud took a different view of those duties in his own case. His one supreme object was to maintain the Protestant religion as by law established pure from any taint of Popery; and he wisely refused to coerce good and sincere men, who had this object at heart equally with himself, because they could not endure certain Papistical ceremonies. Like that of James himself, his theology was cast in the mould of Calvinism, and he looked upon the teachings of Arminius as heresies, as indeed do the *Thirty-nine Articles* themselves for the most part. He refused, therefore, to prefer the holders of these tenets, and so was guilty of injustice to many good men. But such an injustice was by no means Abbot's monopoly, at a time when persecution was regarded as the natural weapon of religious controversy. To his credit be it said, he rarely persecuted with the

same remorseless rigour which marked the stern rule of his successor. His opposition to what he regarded as heresies was rather passive than active, and his customary method of dealing with those whom he deemed recalcitrant was to refuse them preferment and so prevent their attempts to swell their fortune or influence.

An eloquent preacher, and a scholar above the average, a man of much administrative capacity though filled with prejudices, he earned his preferment, and it cannot be denied that he strove to fulfil his duties with a single eye. His moral reputation is untarnished, and his sincerity of conviction is transparent. No fear of disgrace or death could induce him to sanction the monstrous wishes even of the King, when he supported his immoral favourites. His conduct in the case of the infamous Carr is the model conduct of a wise and bold minister. His flat refusal to bow the knee to the imperious folly of the Duke of Buckingham can only exalt him in the opinion of the men of later ages than his own; his manly support of the Petition of Right, at the risk almost of his life, must commend him to true lovers of our national freedom, and his tranquil, though not morose, piety was eminently suited to his high office. That he was narrow and obstinate in his own opinions may be true, but where can we find in our history a narrower or more obstinate man than Laud in the Church or out of it? Both men were absolutely sincere; let both receive equal credit for their sincerity. With the laity Abbot was always popular; he made no priestly pretensions to dictate to their souls; his was an availing voice in Parliament, and his genial hospitality was the delight of those who shared in his banquets. If, then, his opponents among the clergy have maligned his memory, because he would not yield to their opinions against his conscience, on their head who would have had him live a lie, and not on his who was true to himself, let the odium fall.

That Abbot was a strong partisan cannot be denied; but that he ever did wilful injustice is totally untrue. The wisdom of his policy of moderation to the Puritans may be called in question by those who would not have the national Church called Protestant. Nor indeed can any keen critic fail to perceive the disorder and lack of uniformity of which his method of government was the direct cause. But it must always be said of him that he

had a strong regard for the underlying principles of sound doctrine, rather than a passion for uniformity of discipline enforced by fines, the pillory, and the prison. He could read the hearts of many of the devout ministers whom Laud treated with great roughness of manner and rigid severity before the Court of High Commission. Abbot scorned to make an ecclesiastical court the vehicle of spreading abroad his Calvinistic convictions, and almost the only men who suffered for their religion were the Papists. Nor can it be affirmed that even these were persecuted on such a ground alone; the archbishop was a statesman of limited but definite perception; he saw the evil of allowing the Pope a footing, however slight, in the land, and Popery he strove to put down with all his might. The inspiration of his policy was hatred of Popery in every form, and it was on this account that he favoured the lecturers. The wisdom of his policy may be questioned; but its sincerity as well as the underlying motives are so transparent, that any attempt to vilify his character in such a direction may be unhesitatingly set down as a wanton, or at least a careless, calumny. His contempt for ultra-clerical assumption was as wholesome as it was pronounced, and there can be little doubt that this was one of the features of Laud's character which first provoked his animosity. He was unfair to Laud; but the reverse is equally true, and he never used the influence of a powerful favourite to trip up his rival's heels. Granted that he excluded him when possible from the Court of High Commission; but the reason was at all events not unsound. He suspected the restless little man's tendency towards Rome, and he knew that small fairness towards those who were brought before the Court could be expected from him.

When two manifestly sincere men of strong and contrary convictions meet, they cannot fail to be unfair to one another; but that fact should not blind the partisans of the one to the sincerity of the other. Let the Laudians assert that Abbot was mistaken, if they will; but let them not venture to deny that he was true to his conscience, and that he did his duty, as he saw it. He was not a great archbishop like Laud himself, but he was greater than many who have held his place, and who have won higher reputations. Moreover, he had some of the elements of greatness, which were absent from his rival.

He would flatter no Court favourite, and he withstood two kings to their face. It is unfortunate for his true appreciation that the national Church is suffering from the influence of the Laudian spirit, which is incapable of doing justice outside of the limited range of its own heroes and idols. But when this backward movement receives a check, Abbot will rise to his true place in the history of his Church, and he will be found to have been a strong, true-hearted and noble-minded man. His rugged manners were ill-calculated to gain him the affections of those whose appetite for flattery was as gross as it was insatiable. But he remained true to himself in the face of strong temptations, and as such he must be known and honoured for all time. He suffered the greatest misfortune which can happen to a conscientious and not unsympathetic man in his accidental homicide; but he kept a resolute heart in fortune, good and evil alike. On August 3rd, 1633,¹ he passed away in peaceful quiet and full of years, in good time for himself. In fine, he has left behind him the memory of a just and righteous man, who according to his lights faithfully discharged the duties of every station in life which he occupied, and that, too, with a temperate spirit of moderation, which his successor would have done well to have imitated in his more turbulent primacy.

“ Whose calm soul in a settled state
Kicks under foot the frowns of fate,
And in his fortunes bad or good
Keeps the same temper in his blood;
Not him the flaming cloud above,
Nor Ætna's fiery tempests move.
No fretting seas from shore to shore,
Boiling with indignation o'er,
Nor burning thunderbolt, that can
A mountain shake, can stir this man.”

¹ Laud, *Troubles and Trial* (1695), p. 49; *Historian's Guide* (1679), p. 13.



from his tendency to far-fetched plays of wit. No one realized more clearly than himself the necessity of being at the same time brief and telling; but for the most part, when he toiled after brevity, he attained obscurity.

Himself the most severe critic of his muse, he yet believed that some of his work would live for ever. Singing the praises of his mistress, who may have been merely a creation of his fancy, he says of his poems,—

“And when in future times they shall be read,
(As sure, I think, they will not die).”¹

It may be that his poems have died hard; yet to the average reader of poetry there can be no question that they are dead for the most part. Thus he was perhaps claiming too much, though he was in fact one of the most modest of men; but his claim is easily intelligible, when the universal popularity of his works in his own day is taken into consideration. Moreover, there must be something in the works of a poet, who commanded such excessive admiration in the minds of many competent critics; and an examination of the reasons of his contemporary fame and of its fading, will not be time unprofitably thrown away. Such an investigation will lead over dangerous ground, and through not a few bypaths, in which individual taste must of necessity be the only guide. But to recall the past glories of the dead poet, and if possible to reawaken some of the enthusiasm with which he was honoured in his lifetime, is surely a charitable office. Besides, good poets are not so common to-day in this age of rhythmical rubbish, but that the serious consideration of the life and works of a man of great gifts may reasonably expect to meet with lenient consideration.

First, then, the praise of his admirers must be examined and carefully weighed; since their standard of true poetry differs much from ours, and their opinions in most cases deserve respectful attention. It will not be necessary to quote the not over poetical eulogies of his contemporaries: posthumous praise, when praise alone was the object, cannot be esteemed sound criticism, and the majority of Cowley's eulogists have succeeded in praising him with greater fulness than discretion. It is poor commendation to admire every line which a poet has written; for poets, in spite of the immortality of some of their number, are

¹ *Works* (Ed. VI., 1680), p. 65.

subject to occasional indigestion, literary and otherwise, as well as to occasional verse. They have their moments of real inspiration, as they have their dull seasons, when little else but an impoverished exchequer persuades them to write. Indiscriminate praise, therefore, is as unjust to their memory as indiscriminating censure. Cowley has had his full share of both, and his real title to poetic fame has suffered quite as much from fulsome flattery as from unwise severity. Addison, who may be regarded as a sound judge of a certain kind of poetry, gives no clearer proof of his critical capacity than in his judgment of this poet. In his *Account of the Greatest English Poets*, written in 1694, to Sacheverell, he sings, or warbles :—

“Great Cowley then, a mighty genius, wrote,
O’errun with wit, and lavish of his thought:
His turns too closely on the reader press;
He more had pleased us, had he pleased us less.
One glittering thought no sooner strikes our eyes
With silent wonder, but new wonders rise;
As in the milky way a shining white
O’erflows the heavens with one continual light;
That not a single star can show his rays,
Whilst jointly all promote the common blaze.”¹

It is just this superabundance of turns of wit which distracts the reader and prevents him from singling out the various elements of the poet’s genius from the dazzling fertility of that genius. Cowley could not refrain from following thoughts which were merely incidental to his main theme, and though his wanderings often lead through a rich and beautiful underwood, they prevent his reader from seeing the main purpose of his various poems.

In order to understand what is meant by his wit, it will be necessary to see what Cowley himself designed by his wit; and fortunately he has left a comparatively complete definition, the pith of which is fairly represented in the following stanza :—

“In a true piece of *wit* all things must be,
Yet all things there agree.
As in the Ark, joined without force or strife,
All creatures dwelt; all creatures that had life.
Or as the primitive forms of all,
If we compare great things with small,
Which without discord or confusion lie
In the strange mirror of the Deity.”²

¹ *Biographia Britannica sub Cowley*, Vol. II. p. 1,504.

² Cowley, *Works* (Ed. VI.), p. 4.

With this extensive definition as a guide, it is possible to estimate Cowley's position as a poet and as a wit. By it he carefully led his Pegasus, and his wit certainly contains all things in compact and often difficult stanzas. Nay, had his wit contained a little less, it would have suffered neither in intelligibility nor in effect. Sometimes within the compass of a single poem, and even of a single stanza, so many divergent thoughts are found, each of which is powerful and effective in itself, that the power and the effect are marred by the luxuriance of loosely connected ideas. Few poets have been so fertile in simile; fewer still have been so completely given over to the mania of conceits, which shows itself obtrusively enough in Shakespeare's earlier poems. The day of the conceit in poetry has passed, and a purer taste for naturalness in writing has succeeded. It is now universally recognised that artificiality of style mars the effectiveness of verse, and wit is sacrificed to qualities of a higher and more enduring character. Nature has returned to her old Homeric sway of Parnassus, to the immeasurable advantage of the gentle art, and the poets of a later date have realized that in nature and human nature lies their surest appeal to the sympathies of their readers.

Pope, too, a poet of no mean rank despite his artificiality of style and expression, loved Cowley, and understood him better perhaps than the critics of the nineteenth century can hope to do. He couples him with Sir John Denham in his *Windsor Forest*, of whose shades he sings :—

“Here his first lays majestic Denham sung;
There the last numbers flowed from Cowley's tongue.
Oh, early lost! what tears the river shed,
When the sad pomp along his banks was led!
His drooping swans on every note expire,
And on his willows hung each Muse's lyre!
Since fate relentless stopped their heavenly voice,
No more the forests ring, or groves rejoice;
Who now shall charm the shades, where Cowley strung
His living harp, and lofty Denham sung?”¹

Denham has shared Cowley's fate, though he scarcely deserves to be ranked in the same poetical circle with his greater contemporary. Pope's criticism partakes of the nature of eulogy, and serves chiefly to show what one distinguished poet thought of another. Those who know

¹ *Windsor Forest*, lines 271-280.

and love his *Essay on Criticism*, however much they may reasonably disagree with many of its fundamental principles, must perforce admit that he was a capable critic, where his prejudices did not blindfold his sense of justice. There can be no doubt, therefore, that he loved Cowley, both from certain points of faint resemblance between the two poets, and for his own sake. Himself a wit almost unsurpassed in the men of his own day, and with few equals in the present, he was eminently fitted to appreciate wit in another, so long as it was not aimed at him or at any of his friends; and it was Cowley's wit, which was indeed of a different order, which first attracted his wonder and his admiration. Though not an example of metrical variety himself, it would seem certain that he could perceive and enjoy this gift in another, and though many of Cowley's lines must have sounded harsh to his sensitive ear, he could not fail to catch the underlying rhythm in all its sweetness.

Dr. Johnson, whose masculine English and critical acumen have raised his *Lives of the Poets* to the dignity of a classic, had a high opinion of Cowley as a man, a poet, and a writer of nervous and forceable prose. With insufficient reason he ranks him amongst the metaphysical poets, possibly because his poetry embodies the nice subtlety of metaphysics. The worthy Doctor, like Addison, could see faults in the subject of his criticism; but its conclusion, though spoken with a high degree of truth, has a ring of eulogy, which must be estimated at its proper value. "It may be affirmed," he alleges, "without any encomiastic fervour, that Cowley brought to his poetic labours a mind replete with learning, and that his passages are embellished with all the ornaments which books could supply; that he was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode, and the gaiety of the less; that he was qualified for spritely sallies, and for lofty flights; that he was amongst those who free translation from servility, and, instead of following his author at a distance, walked by his side; and that if he left versification improvable, he left likewise from time to time such specimens of excellence as enable succeeding poets to improve it."¹ That this carefully weighed

¹ Johnson's *Poets sub Cowley*. Of course Johnson's standpoint in criticism is not ours, and it must be admitted that he makes many mistakes. But in his estimate of Cowley he comes strikingly near the

statement does not exaggerate Cowley's merits, will be denied by no one who has read the poet with due attention, and thus earned the sole right to criticise his verse. Johnson was by no means blind to his predecessor's faults, which are indeed comparatively obvious; but like a true critic, after pointing out such blemishes as he was able to perceive, he concludes his estimate with such commendation as he could honestly bestow. Would that all modern critics would imitate the great Doctor's method in this respect at least. That Cowley does in point of fact contain most of the excellences previously enumerated, it will be the object of the following pages to demonstrate, while none of his obvious faults will be glossed over with that kindly antiquarian virtue of silence, which strives to hide spots in suns which have long since set.

A few of the main facts of the poet's life will be serviceable in the effort to arrive at any fair estimate of his works, as his circumstances coloured his political vision, and had a tendency to enforce in him that overpowering love of solitude which filled his soul from his earliest years. Abraham Cowley, the posthumous son of a London grocer, was born in Fleet Street, near the end of Chancery Lane, in the year 1618.¹ His parents must have been citizens of some consequence, for by the influence of one or more of her friends his mother was able to obtain for her son a King's Scholarship at Westminster School, where he soon began to show of what mettle he was made. He was studious beyond the compass, or even beyond the desire of the commonplace boy, and his surprising quickness of parts gained him the warm admiration of his teachers. In his retiring nature he bore a remarkable resemblance to Bishop Andrewes, and though he never attained to such high distinction as a scholar, he was a boy of much promise, which ripened into fulfilment in the acquisition of a rich store of varied learning and accomplishments. In these days of specialisation, it cannot but be felt sometimes that, in spite of the high degree of skill obtained in a particular branch by each of the specialists, there is something to be said for the earlier system. Then all was fish that came into the scholar's net, and as a natural

truth, if it be allowed that a poet should be judged by the deliberate plan of his composition.

¹ Wood (Bliss), *Fasti*, Vol. II. cols. 209-213. Lloyd, *Memoires*, pp. 620, 621.

consequence he was able to take broader views of life and literature than are common to-day.

Of his school-life Cowley has left behind one or two interesting little reminiscences, and we could well have wished that there had been more. Amongst other characteristics he hints at his love of solitude, which undoubtedly helped to develop the poet in his soul. "When I was a very young boy," he says, "instead of running about on holidays and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them, and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper."¹ That he did not always nor often succeed in finding a congenial companion, is seen in the course of his whole life, whether spent in the conduct of public affairs or in solitary retirement. The boy's lonely spirit grew lonelier with age, and though he had a host of admirers, he had few intimates. "I was then too," he continues, "so much an enemy to constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persuasions or encouragements, to learn without book the common rules of *Grammar*, in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the usual exercise out of my own reading and observation."² It would thus appear that he had the elements of scholarship within him from his earliest years, and the method of study, which he adopted by his own unaided discernment, bears a close resemblance to that which Roger Ascham learned from such experience in teaching. When a boy realizes that the grammar of a language is best learned from the intelligent reading of that language, that boy is no common boy, and Cowley from his boyhood was capable of outdistancing most of his schoolfellows.

But he did not confine himself to the acquisition of learning; he was a poet born, and poetry soon laid claim to his hearty allegiance. "But how this love came to be produced in me so early," he says, "is a hard question. I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse, as have never since left ringing there: for I remember, when I began to read, and take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion),

¹ *Essays in Prose and Verse* (1680), *Essay of Myself*, p. 143.

² *Idem ibidem*.

but there was wont to lie Spenser's *Works*. This I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there (though my understanding had little to do with all this): and by degrees with the tinkling of the rhyme and the dance of the numbers, so that I think that I had read him all over before twelve years old, and was thus made a poet as immediately as a child is made an eunuch."¹ Spenser has been called a poet's poet with good reason: most of his successors have owed more to him than they might have been ready to acknowledge, and there can be little doubt that the great Elizabethan's poetical fancy and unique creative power, laid hold of a kindred spirit in the soul of his young disciple. Be that as it may, in 1633 Cowley brought out what he called *Poetical Blossoms*, some of which had burst into bloom in his tenth year, while some were produced by the time he had reached the age of twelve. The portrait of the precocious poet, as he appeared in his fifteenth year, in which the thin volume was published, appears on the title-page, and presents the face of an unusually thoughtful-looking boy. There is considerable merit in these youthful productions, which, from their novelty, at once caught the public taste, and ran through several editions. Two of the longer poems deal with the pathetic stories of Constantia and Philetus, and of Pyramus and Thisbe. They are remarkably free and flowing in rhythm; their scope of fancy is striking, and they would have done no injustice to an older craftsman. Cowley's reading of Spenser has influenced his style; but the quaint conceits of *Venus and Adonis*, to say nothing of the metre and rhythm, have affected him still more deeply. Indeed, to his latest years he was an admirer and a skilful user of the conceit, and his devotion to this somewhat artificial kind of cleverness has marred most of his later poetry.

But in these juvenile efforts are pithy lines and sententious couplets which are truly surprising in one so young, and consequently so untrained in the experiences of time. Thus in direct anticipation of Tennyson he says:—

“For to remember sorrows passed away,
Is to renew an old calamity.”²

¹ *Essays in Prose and Verse* (1680), *Essay of Myself*, p. 144.

² *Juvenile Poems* (1700), p. 8, stanza 47.

Again his epitaph on Pyramus and Thisbe is undoubtedly defective here and there in rhyme and rhythm ; but in spite of its obvious faults it gives promise of high achievement.

I.

"Underneath this marble stone
Lie two beauties joined in one.

II.

Two whose loves death could not sever,
For both lived, both died together.

III.

Two whose souls being too divine
For earth, in their own sphere now shine.

IV.

Who have left their loves to fame,
And their earth to earth again."¹

The defects in this artless epitaph are so transparent, that they do not need to be pointed out ; but the lines in themselves have an unaffected pathos and a tender simplicity in them, which are little short of surprising in a ten or even in a twelve years old poet. Some of the stanzas have a more pretentious style, and therefore less poetic power ; but none of the poems is entirely destitute of the real marks of genuine poetry, and Cowley might have said of himself as did Pope at a later period, and with no less truth,

"I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came."

The *Poetical Blossoms* were dedicated with a young poet's confidence to John Williams, then Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Lincoln ; but his reception of his youthful admirer's tribute is not recorded, though it could not fail to be kindly from one who was himself kindly. While he was still at school, Cowley produced a pastoral comedy, which he called *Love's Riddle*, and a Latin comedy entitled *Naufragium Jocularis*, both of which give evidence of spirit and merit. The first of these dramatic efforts was a poetical dedication to Sir Kenelm Digby, which concludes with the following witty couplet, which betrays its author's youth and the soothing discipline of his day :—

"And if it please your taste, my muse will say
The *birch*, which crowned her then, is grown a *bay*."

¹ *Juvenile Poems* (1700), p. 32.

Neither of these pieces was actually published until the year 1638,¹ though both appear to have been acted at his own school. Whether he himself took part in either of them may well be doubted. Always a shy and retiring boy, he would have shrunk from such needless publicity, though the tyrannical powers of the lords of the birch might have induced him to become a candidate for the actor's bays. Cowley as a precocious poet is one thing, but as an unwilling actor he would be quite another. That he would enjoy seeing his plays performed can hardly be questioned; but it is no less certain that if he had had to assist in their production his pleasure would have vanished into thin air.

In 1636 he proceeded to Cambridge, where he was in due course elected scholar of Trinity College. Here he took the usual degrees of Bachelor of Arts in or about October, 1640, and of Master of Arts in March, 1643. He was elected fellow of his college in 1643, though he does not appear to have had any intentions of entering the Church.² For all that he studied Divinity along with most of the other branches of learning, and his deeply pious soul recoiled from the trifling subtleties of the Schoolmen.³ When Prince Charles visited Cambridge, in 1642, Cowley produced a play called *The Guardian*, which, with many alterations after the Restoration, became comparatively popular under the new title of *The Cutter of Coleman Street*. The author speaks in slighting terms of the first version of this spritely comedy, which he complains "was made and acted before the Prince, in his passage through Cambridge to York, at the beginning of the late unhappy war, or rather neither made nor acted, but rough-drawn only and repeated; for the haste was so great that it could neither be revised nor perfected by the author, nor learned without book by the actors, nor set forth in any measure tolerably by the officers of the College."⁴ So strongly did he feel the inadequacy of this comedy, both in itself and its manner of production, that he apologised for its imperfections both in the prologue and epilogue,⁵ with which apologies we can only hope the good-natured Prince was contented. But the gentle poet's exasperation must have been sincere, when

¹ Wood (Bliss), *Fasti*, Vol. II., col. 210.

² *Idem*, Vol. II., col. 210.

³ *Pindaric Odes, To Hobbes*, stanza 2.

⁴ *Collected Works* (1680), pp. 1, 2.

⁵ *Idem*, *Miscellanies*, pp. 15, 16.

he found himself compelled to produce a piece which did not do justice either to his genius or to his reputation. A man may be shy and modest in all relations of life, but neither the defect nor the virtue will do away with what he feels to be a needless mortification; nor is any mortification severer than the involuntary exhibition of something, which belies the real power of a man, in the presence of one before whom he is especially anxious to appear at his best.

The foregoing is almost the only recorded experience of Cowley during his life at Cambridge; but while he was pursuing the tranquil walks of learning in his own unobtrusive fashion, he found himself one of the number of the ejected fellows of the spring of 1643. The hard fate of these learned and for the most part harmless students was in part due to their exaggerated loyalty, but in part to the desire of the Parliament to fill one of the Universities with its own adherents, since Oxford was overflowing with sturdy and devoted royalists. Here Cowley found a welcome and a secure retreat, and he remained incorporated with St. John's College until the surrender of his city of refuge on June 24th, 1646. Here he was able, amid disturbances around him, to pursue his studies, though he never neglected to serve the King to the best of his power. Whether he actually took his part in the field must remain uncertain, but he did fight with great vigour with his pen. It was in the year 1643 that his fierce and damaging satire of *The Puritan and the Papist* appeared, which, by linking them together with the very men whom they hated and despised most on earth, provoked the godly party to an almost savage intensity of resentment. Here, too, he seems to have written three books of a poetical *History of the Civil War*, of which the earliest known edition is the posthumous one of 1679, and which was much admired by the members of his own party. Moreover, the purity of his loyalty and his marvellous wit brought him into high favour with Charles, and he became a confidential agent, to whom was entrusted the delicate task of deciphering the correspondence which passed between the King and his absent Queen.

It cannot be decided at what time he obtained this difficult position; it seems comparatively certain that he left England to follow the wavering fortunes of Henrietta Maria in 1646. He was welcomed alike by the loyalist

exiles and at the French Court, whither his reputation had preceded him; and he travelled on many dangerous journeys to serve the cause which lay nearest to his heart. At Paris he fell in with Dr. Stephen Gough, a brother of the Oratory, by whose kindness he was introduced to the service of Henry Jermyn, afterwards Earl of St. Albans, who is said to have been married to the Queen after her husband's death. Of his life on the continent but scanty traces are left; he could not fail to have met and rejoiced in the society of the banished Waller, and it is not improbable that he then formed his friendship with John Evelyn, who was at that time taking the grand tour by special permission of the House of Commons.¹ But he appears to have undertaken more than one confidential journey of extreme danger to Jersey, Holland, and to Scotland. His object would be to communicate with royalist friends, and to stir up resistance to the forces of the Parliament.² That he failed in his various missions is no discredit to his diplomacy, if such a term may be fitly applied to the negotiations of so single-hearted a man. The forces of the time were opposed to him, and the conspicuous folly of the Stuarts had gone far to alienate the affections of the greater part of their subjects, while the strongest of the continental powers used the misfortunes of the exiles to further their own selfish interests. An angel could not have fared better, and Cowley was the champion of a cause which had been ruined by its own adherents. Hence he failed to convince his party of the need of wise counsels, and he could not persuade the hard-headed Scots that they would derive any tangible gain from accepting his plans and acting upon them.

On his arrival in Paris, during 1646, he found his brother-poet, the somewhat slatternly saint, Richard Crashaw, in dire straits; indeed, Crashaw was at all times better able to sing the praises of heaven than to transact earthly business. Cowley, who had a genuine and well-merited admiration for the poet of *Steps to the Temple*, went to him and brought the shy songster into public notice to the best of his power. Nay, he went so far as to procure for him from the exiled Queen letters of

¹ Evelyn, *Diary* (Wheatley), 1879, Vol. I., pp. 262, 263, 294, 296, etc.

² Wood (Bliss), *Fasti*, Vol. II. col. 210. *Essays in Prose and Verse*, p. 145.

commendation, whereby on his journey to Italy Crashaw was able to procure the post of secretary to a Roman Cardinal.¹ No elegy from Cowley's pen is nobler than that which sings the death of his brother-poet,² to whom he had ministered in the hour of his supremest need, and that from the scanty purse of his own misfortunes. Busy as he was at Paris and elsewhere in conducting the affairs of the royal family, Cowley still found time to indulge his muse, and in 1647 appeared in London, by the help of his friends, his collection of love-poems known as *The Mistress*. The merit of these verses, which will be discussed later, is of a high order; and though their author does not appear to have been addressing a mistress of flesh and blood, he writes always with a grace of a highly finished kind, and sometimes with genuine passion. It would seem probable that he did no more than collect and select a number of his scattered offspring on this fruitful theme; but each lyric in the collection has a relation to the rest, and each in its own rank is an exquisitely polished production. That he found time, amidst his numerous journeys and his extensive correspondence, for such a task, however congenial, speaks much for his industry, though no doubt he found great relief from his more arduous duties in preparing for the world what he had long destined to publish.

But the conduct of secret missions and the service of an exiled family, such as that of the Stewarts, are tasks too engrossing to aid in the inspiration to poetry, and with the exception of *The Four Ages of England*, published in 1648, no further poems of his appeared in print for a long time. Of course the difficulty of publication may be one of the chief reasons of this silence, but a close investigation of his surviving works does not favour any such view. He may have sung upon occasion for the delight of his noble patron and his royal mistress, as Phemius sang for the suitors of Penelope; but if he sang at all, his songs have suffered the fate of many other poems in that dreary season of continual anxiety and protracted misfortune. It is true that his play of the *Guardian* was printed in 1650; but that was certainly without his consent, and any profits arising from the venture went into the then bottomless pockets of the book-

¹ Wood (Bliss), *Fasti*, Vol. II. col. 5.

² Cowley, *Miscellanies* (1680), pp. 29, 30.

sellers. The same may be said of that collection known as *The Iron Age*, which he deliberately disowned in the preface to a collection of his works published under his direction shortly after the Restoration. "I wondered very much," he complains in his strictures upon this unauthorised edition, "how one who could be so foolish to write so ill verses, should yet be so wise to set them forth as another man's rather than his own; though, perhaps, he might have made a better choice, and not fathered his bastard upon such a person, whose stock of reputation is, I fear, little enough for the maintenance of his own numerous legitimate offspring of that kind. It would have been much less injurious if it had pleased the author to put forth some of my writings under his own name, rather than his own under mine; he had been in that a more pardonable plagiarist, and had done less wrong by robbery than he does by such a bounty; for nobody can be justified by the imputation even of another's merit; and our own coarse clothes are like to become us better than those of another man's, though never so rich; but these, to say the truth, were so *beggarly* that I myself was ashamed to wear them. It was vain for me, that I avoided censure by the concealment of my own writings, if my reputation could thus be executed in effigy; and impossible it is now for my good name to be in safety, if the malice of witches have the power to consume and destroy it in an image of their own making. This indeed was so ill-made, and so unlike, that I hope the charm took no effect. So that I esteem myself less prejudiced by it than by that which has been done to me since, which is the publication of some things of mine without my consent or knowledge, and those so mangled and imperfect that I could neither with honour acknowledge, nor with honesty quite disavow them."¹

That *The Iron Age* must indeed have been of iron, though its author's face may have been of brass, to have called forth so strong a protest from a man who was ordinarily kind and gentle to a fault, those who have read it may be able to judge. No other reason can be assigned for its appearance than the hope on the part of some unknown poetaster to transmute some of his iron into gold. Who the writer or editor is, is quite unknown; but that he smarted under the richly-deserved reproof of a

¹ *Collected Works* (1680), *Miscellanies*, *Preface*, p. 1.

man whom he had grossly wronged, can hardly be doubted, if he survived to read the pungent condemnation. The prose, in which this is written, is in Cowley's best style, and that is saying much. He was an undisputed master of simple and flowing English, and his powers of sarcastic invective were possessed of exceptional strength. But the incident serves to show that the poet had been comparatively silent during the ten tedious years of his absence from England, or at the very least that he himself authorised no collection of his scattered offspring during the later years of his exile. There was good reason for such reticence at a time when loyalists of any degree of enthusiasm were in grave danger of fine, imprisonment, and in some cases death, if the hands of the governing party could be laid upon them. The poet could not himself come to London with any security to watch over the publication of his works, and he naturally preferred to leave them unpublished rather than to trust them to the tender mercies of the printer without careful correction. Besides, Cowley was too well known a Malignant, to use the charitable phrase of the day, to be lightly suffered to remain at large for days, let alone for weeks, in the city of London. His presence would at once have given colour to suspicions of a wholesome plot to restore the exiled Prince to the throne of his father; and the hand of justice in that exciting period was stretched out quite as far to secure the existing state of things, as to cut off legal offenders.

Cowley's letters to Henry Bennet, who afterwards became Earl of Arlington, have been preserved; but for the most part they throw no additional light upon his character.¹ They were all of them written from Paris during the four months of the year 1650, which extend from April to the middle of August, and their style, as is always the case with Cowley's prose style, is especially easy and delightful. They give evidence of much more business capacity than usually falls to the lot of poets; they show how fully he was trusted in all matters connected with the royal cause, and how hopelessly inadequate were the mass of the councillors who surrounded Charles II., and they manifest a keen insight into the general affairs of the United Kingdom and of several of the European powers. Cowley manifests, too, a faculty

¹ T. Brown, *Miscellanea Aulica* (1702), pp. 130-160.

of making diplomatic combinations, which is always skilful and sometimes even surprising. Had he had more and better materials with which to work, he would have achieved a success for his party, which may not have been desirable, but which would have been tolerably complete. As it was, he had to content himself with dirty tools and unreliable instruments, so that it is not wonderful that his plans were ingenious rather than successful. That he could have really enjoyed such a task is in the highest degree improbable; he was by nature a student, who revelled in retirement, and whose solace was the making of poetry or some similar pursuit. But he was an ardent and enthusiastic Royalist, who perceived what seemed to him to be his plain duty, and he resolved to do it faithfully and with all his strength. Furthermore, it must have jarred upon the nature of so single-minded a man to be driven into the crooked ways of diplomacy by the force of untoward circumstances, and it does seem hard to understand that he was able to make a successful diplomatist without forfeiting the respect even of pronounced enemies. Always in danger, he spent his days with a calm tranquillity, which did much to cheer the drooping spirits of his friends, and his resolute enthusiasm was able to keep alive the flickering fire of loyalism for a longer period than could have been the case without its inspiration.

But in spite of the very real dangers of returning to England, some time in 1656 Cowley ventured to find his way to his native land. He had devised a plan, which he was one of the first to put into execution, by which the exiled Royalists should make their peace with the government of the country, and settle down at home in ostensible submission to a power which they saw no present possibility of overthrowing. But though they were outwardly peaceable enough, it was their business to keep a watchful eye upon the march of events, and to hold themselves in readiness to move if there were any signs of change in public feeling. Those who followed out this far-seeing policy returned at their own risk, and amongst their number none ran a greater risk than Cowley, who could not fail to meet with severe punishment if he should be seized and brought to trial. That Cromwell was in the main merciful may be readily admitted; but it is no less certain that his mercy was apt to give out in his treatment

of extreme Malignants, whom he regarded with great disfavour as the perverse and untiring foes of their country. It was sufficiently well known that Cowley was a trusted loyalist commissioner, who had spared neither time nor labour to further the cause of the exiled family. Nor can it have escaped the notice of so lynx-eyed a minister as Secretary Thurloe that he had frequently made journeys to promote the interests of the fallen monarchy. But the poet was a strong man, who did not shrink from being among the first to try a plan which he had formed, and to England he came, putting his liberty, if not his life, into his hand by so doing. It was necessary for him to have some avowed peaceful object, that he might give an unhesitating answer if he fell into the hands of his enemies, and this he found in the study of medicine. Nor did he use this engrossing pursuit merely as a blind to the too pressing attentions of possible spies. "After many anatomical dissections, he proceeded to the consideration of simples, and having furnished himself with books of that nature, he retired into a fruitful part of Kent, where every field and wood might show him the real figures of those plants of which he had read. Thus he speedily mastered that part of the art of medicine."¹ The results of this patient study were seen in his Latin poem entitled *Plantarum Libri Duo*, which were afterwards enlarged by the addition of four more, in recognition of the merits of which he appears to have been admitted to the degree of Doctor of Medicine at Oxford in 1657.

Having thus achieved his double object, he seems to have returned to France² filled with despair of any immediate success for the royal cause. But he had not passed so many months in England without experiencing a narrow escape from a serious danger. He was arrested for another Malignant with whom he had been confused; nor did he escape from the severe restraint to which he was then subjected without finding bail for £1,000, which was, however, provided by two of his patrons. It must be noticed at this point, that his apparent compliance with the Protector's government procured him the *mandamus* by which he was enabled to take his medical degree at Oxford, a circumstance which told against him in the eyes of greedier men at the Restoration, who had done less and

¹ *Book of Plants (Translation)*, Preface, p. 1.

² Wood, *Fasti*, Vol. II., col. 210.

got more by their loyalty. To this ungrateful distrust on the part of those whom he had faithfully served, his *Ode on Brutus* contributed, as well as one or two expressions in his poem on the *Death of Cromwell*, which were wrung from him by the real greatness of the man. The unscrupulous hangers-on of the banished King doubtless envied the quiet poet his real services, and feared that he would win some reward which they had counted upon as their own, should a restoration be accomplished. At this point it will be fit and proper to say, once and for always, that, whether Cowley's veiled royalism during the period of his return from France can be quite reconciled with the strict integrity of his character or not, there cannot be the slightest foundation for the slander that his actual loyalty was tarnished. Nay, to neglect for so long a time after the Restoration a man distinguished by laborious and faithful service, is as striking a proof of Charles's culpable carelessness as of the malice of noisier but less devoted servants. But obtrusive professions and clamorous self-assertion went further with a King who studied his own selfish convenience and the indulgence of his immoral pleasures far more than the silent record of unnumbered services.

When Cowley returned to France, having at last shaken himself free from the persecution of his enemies, he was no doubt convinced of the utter hopelessness of effecting a change in affairs, so long as Cromwell lived. But the great Protector was prematurely cut off before he had succeeded in establishing his somewhat arbitrary power upon a permanent basis, and the strife of the contending factions was skilfully used by George Monk to foster his own greatness, by bringing about the Restoration. When this famous event took place, in 1660, the loyal poet made his appearance at Court, where he was for some time eyed askance by the noisy crowd of hungry place-hunters, who feared that his real claims would outweigh the loud pretensions which they put forth for themselves. When he went so far as to solicit some reward for his sufferings, Charles is said to have bent a stern frown upon him, and to have uttered the severe words, "Your pardon, Mr. Cowley, is your reward." If this story be true, as seems almost certain, the easy King is convicted of an ingratitude which, even for a Stuart, is little less than shameless. It may be urged on his behalf, that he

was too ready to listen to malicious stories and misinterpreted quotations from one of Cowley's poems. But that cannot be held to be any sound excuse for Charles, who was a shrewd enough man to see through such perversions. When men, who had actually taken a prominent part in opposition to his father during the Civil War, won their promotion by taking part in his Restoration, what plea can be urged for a King who carelessly neglected his old friends to favour new and doubtful allies? Many others of the older Royalists thus suffered from the injustice of the Court; but, amongst all of them, Cowley's hard case can only provoke sympathy and indignation.

That the neglected and abused poet deeply felt the ingratitude and malicious envy of his former friends, may be clearly seen from that pathetic poem, *The Complaint*, which he must have written not many weeks after his *Ode on the Restoration*. The joyous return of the King had been followed by a perfect rain of honours and profits upon all sorts and conditions of Royalists, which, like its natural prototype, had fallen "on the just and on the unjust." But not a drop of gold or anything else had as yet fallen into Cowley's almost empty trencher; nay, he had scarcely a crumb of comfort to feed his hungry heart. Determined to retire from a world which he loved so little, and which had used him so ill, he took up his residence at the village of Barn Elms, which was not far from London, on the south side of the Thames. At the same time, from his scanty home, he uttered his *Complaint*, which takes the form of a Pindaric Ode, and in which the muse is represented as deriding her former votary for having so long deserted the shades of Parnassus. In the course of her address, she says with some feeling:—

Go, renegado, cast up thy account,
 And see to what amount
 Thy foolish gains by quitting me:
 The sale of knowledge, fame, and liberty,
 The fruits of thy unlearn'd apostasy.
 Thou thought'st, if once the public storm were pass'd,
 All thy remaining life should sunshine be;
 Behold the public storm is spent at last,
 The sovereign is toss'd at sea no more,
 And thou, with all thy noble company,
 Art got at last to shore.
 But whilst thy fellow-voyagers I see
 All marched up to possess the Promis'd Land,
 Thou still alone (alas!) dost gaping stand
 Upon the naked beach, upon the barren strand.

As a fair morning of the blessed spring,
 After a tedious, stormy night;
 Such was the glorious entry of our King,
 Enriching moisture dropp'd on ev'rything,
 Plenty he sowed below, and cast about him light.
 But then (alas!) to thee alone,
 One of old Gideon's miracles was shown,
 For ev'ry tree and ev'ry herb around
 With pearly dew was crown'd,
 And upon all the quicken'd ground,
 The fruitful seed of heav'n did brooding lie,
 And nothing but the muse's fleece was dry.¹

That Cowley sang from the bitterness of his soul cannot be denied. He was conscious of having deserved well and won no recognition of his deserts. Among the crowd of those who had given little but lip service to assist the King and his ministers, the retiring poet was nowhere; he might never have existed, so completely was he overlooked. Ill tongues had done him an ill office, and, for a time, he suffered from the malice of their spite, and from the sadness of neglect.

It was at this time that Cowley determined to retire into that country life which had always been the object of his aspiration, and to devote himself to those peaceful pursuits of rural life and dalliance with the muse, which he had loved from his earliest boyhood. At first he had little enough to keep him from starvation; but he was content with little, though, undoubtedly, disappointed that his royal master should have shown such complete forgetfulness of him and his services. But at length, by the favour of the Duke of Buckingham, who, in his unfailing kindness to the poet, has wiped out some of his numerous transgressions, he obtained several small estates in Surrey, one of which, at Chertsey, was his final place of abode, and consisted of a farm worth about £300² a year. Here he spent his days in the pleasant task of superintending the labours of his hinds, though their perverse debauchery seems to have provoked his tranquil temper so far, that it found relief in occasional oaths which were not judicial. His nights he passed in company with his books, and now and then with a congenial friend, such as Thomas Sprat, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, and John Evelyn. His health had already been enfeebled by a fever from which he had suffered at Barn Elms, his first place of retirement,

¹ *Verses on Several Occasions* (1680), p. 29, stanzas 3 and 4.

² Aubrey, *Lives*, Vol. II., p. 294.

and he was not permitted to enjoy that solitude, which was his greatest comfort in life, for more than seven or eight years at most. As he himself says with much pathos, "But God laughs at man who says to his soul, 'Take thine ease.' I met presently not only with many little encumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness (a new misfortune to me) as would have spoiled the happiness of an emperor as well as mine."¹ That his abandonment of his active life in the political world, no less than the low-lying situation of Barn Elms, acted prejudicially on his health, is shown by the abundant testimonies of his friends, and there is no doubt that he suffered severely upon both accounts.

It cannot be said for a moment that Cowley was idle in his retirement—that was not in his nature; but the sudden change from the exciting and arduous office of a political agent appears to have affected him in spite of himself. He loved solitude; but he was too suddenly plunged into its cool retreat to be able to take that delight in its quiet which he had long promised himself. His life was thrown out of gear, if the modern simile may be pardoned, for a time, and his body was thus rendered more liable to the attacks of disease, which it might otherwise have more easily repelled. At Barn Elms a long and enfeebling fever fell upon him, which did much to permanently weaken his once robust constitution; nay, even at his healthier home in Chertsey, a similar fever attacked him, and the quiet years of his solitude were thus disturbed by pains utterly unknown to him during his more active life. The house in which this second fever laid hold of him was called the Porch House, and as far as situation and surroundings are concerned it would seem to have been sufficiently healthy, except for the neighbourhood of the river Thames. Like a brave, true man, he battled with his troubles, and it is but seldom that a hint of them appears in his works of this date. There is, perhaps, an unwonted tinge of sadness in his later poems and essays; but that may be quite as much due to advancing years, to solitude, and to ill-health, as to any other causes. Indeed, the influence of solitude is calculated to produce a gentle melancholy in a man of Cowley's contemplative disposition, which would be more likely to display itself in his writings than in his intercourse with his friends.

¹ *Essays in Prose and Verse* (1680), p. 145.

Moreover, he was a bachelor, and had none of those companions, in the shape of wife and children, who do so much to cheer the declining years of life. It must not be supposed that he was unhappy; in his own way he was perhaps as happy as it was in his nature to be. But his happiness had a tone of reflective melancholy, which is the wonted mark of solitary and continuous students.

Cowley, however, remained true to the wish of his boyhood; and though he was often tempted to quit his calm retreat by promises of profitable employment, now that his faithful service was missed, he resisted all temptations, preferring to devote his remaining days to the study of physical science and to literary pursuits. At Chertsey he was often visited by a small and select band of carefully chosen friends, who shared in his delight in a country life, and who loved his genial, unaffected companionship. Hither came that true gentleman and famous diarist, John Evelyn,¹ who took the keenest interest in his scientific pursuits. Sprat,² the florid poet, who afterwards became the jovial Bishop of Rochester, was a frequent and a welcome guest at the Porch House. He was at this time Prebendary of Westminster, and he rejoiced to spend happy hours with his friend in the fields and lanes along the Thames, and merrier moments during the night in vivacious conversation, not untinctured by strong ale and generous wine. Here he learned that just appreciation of the quiet poet, which is delightfully shown in the almost perfect character-sketch which he prefixed to the 1680 edition of his friend's works. Hither came Dr. John Harvey, whose brother had been Cowley's college friend, and of whose untimely end he has left an immortal elegy.³ The singular respect with which the poet was treated, and the unaffected reverence shown him by his friends, give an unmistakable testimony to his modest and lovable character. In such society did the poet spend the last years of his varied life amid the country scenes, which he loved with all his heart, and the wish of more than forty years was realized after many stormy vicissitudes of changeful fortune.

On the first of August, 1667, Evelyn received the "sad news of Mr. Cowley's death, that incomparable poet, my

¹ *Diary*, May 14, 1663; January 2, 1664, and other dates.

² *Collected Works* (1680), *Life passim*.

³ *Idem*, *Miscellanies*, p. 18.

very dear friend, and was greatly deplored.”¹ Two different causes are assigned to the somewhat premature event, of which the former must surely have been the real one. Having scarcely recovered from his second fever, “in the heat of the last summer, by staying too long amongst his labourers in the meadows, he was taken with a violent defluction and stoppage in his breast and throat. This he neglected as an ordinary cold, and refused to send for his usual physicians, till it was past all remedies; and so in the end, after a fortnight’s sickness, it proved mortal to him.”² Pope preserves an ill-natured piece of gossip, which would seem to relate to some one else, and which appears to be an echo of one of Cowley’s own stories about the said person. He asserts that while dining out with his friend Sprat, the two were so overcome in their cups that they could not find the way home, and so lay in the fields all night. He further says that so late as his own time Sprat was still called “the drunken dean” by the country folk.³ The fact Sprat did not become the Dean of Westminster, or anywhere else, until 1683, or seventeen years after Cowley’s death, sheds an unmistakable light on the falsity of Pope’s piece of gossip. Nor do the circumstances of the tale at all agree with the poet’s character, who was by nature so abstemious that such a thing could never have happened to him. It may therefore be taken for granted that Sprat’s account, which has the advantage of being contemporary, is correct in all essentials. When the King heard of Cowley’s death, with that nice discrimination of character, which was one of the most respectable of his gifts, he is reported to have said, “Mr. Cowley hath not left a better man behind him in England.” Nor could a juster epitaph have been uttered by any prince of any subject.

The universal respect in which the poet was held, both on account of his undoubted genius and his amiable virtues, was abundantly shown at his funeral. Evelyn⁴ says: “Went to Mr. Cowley’s funeral, whose corpse lay at Wallingford House; and was thence conveyed to Westminster Abbey in a hearse with six horses and all funeral decency, near an hundred coaches of noblemen and persons of quality following; among these all the wits of the

¹ *Diary*, August 3, 1667.

² *Works, Life* (1860).

³ Spence, *Anecdotes*, p. 131.

⁴ *Diary*, August 3, 1667.

town, divers bishops and clergymen. He was interred next Geoffrey Chaucer and near Spenser. A goodly monument is since erected to his memory." No fitter resting-place could have been found for one who drew his boyish inspiration from Spenser, and whose genius sent forth the bards of his time in a new direction of poetic style and manner of expression. The Duke of Buckingham, his constant friend and admirer, was responsible for the erection of the stately, though by no means unconventional, monument over Cowley's dust. An engraving of this ponderous memorial of one of the most modest of men is to be found in the translation of his *Books of Plants*, which was published in 1700, and to which it must be confessed that it constitutes a somewhat forbidding frontispiece. The Latin epitaph was composed by the poet's firm friend and sturdy eulogist, Thomas Sprat; and for once, though his poetry be unduly magnified, little but justice has been done to the memory of the man. Cowley was a profound and exact scholar, a poet of much compass and undoubted originality in certain directions, both in his English and Latin poems, a loyalist of unblemished constancy, in spite of the malicious slanders of his jealous rivals, and a man of a deeply pious and stainless life. He was as modest as he was able, as capable of conducting public business as of enjoying the quiet of retirement, a friend of unwavering fidelity, and a companion of gentle and kindly though pungent wit. Such is the picture of the man which those who knew and loved him have left to posterity; while they may have unduly magnified the excellence of his poetry, they could not exaggerate the tender goodness of his life. The most popular poet of his day he lived and died; and now he maintains his chief reputation as the writer of singularly easy and nervous prose.

It becomes necessary then to estimate his place as a poet, and to explain, if possible, the reason of his unpopularity, or, to say the least, of his all but universal neglect to-day. Mr. Edmund Gosse,¹ one of the most discerning critics of the literature of the seventeenth century, has set about this task; but though he has avowedly purposed to do justice to Cowley, he does not seem to have entirely succeeded in his honourable endeavour. The vigour of his essay, and the keenness of

¹ *Seventeenth Century Studies*, sub "Cowley."



MONUMENT OF ABRAHAM COWLEY.

From the Seventh Edition of his Works (1700).

his perceptive faculty, no one will venture to dispute ; but he has unduly exaggerated the harshness of some of the poet's verse, while his estimate of that series of poems known as *The Mistress*, appears to be needlessly severe. Indeed, sometimes the critic seems as if he blamed the poet for writing in a rhythm which his own ear is not sufficiently sensitive to perceive. These strictures upon an authority of deserved eminence, himself a poet of no mean skill, are put forth with much hesitation, and the ensuing pages will make an attempt to justify each in its turn. A careful study of Cowley's poems will lead the reader of a nice ear to the conclusion that each of them has a subtle rhythm of its own, which may at times be far to seek, but which is there even in his most difficult efforts. Of course it may be said, that the reader reads his own rhythm into the poet. But this appears hardly possible ; few musicians can read music into the nightly wail of the melodious cat, and it seems equally impossible to read rhythm into a chaotic poet of the Whitman class. Cowley is by no means of this rank of poet ; the most rugged of his poems is as smooth as polished granite by the side of the strong compositions of Walt Whitman. But even granted that the seventeenth century poet is rugged, those who will take pains can find the rhythm which the poet intended, and when once they have found its sweetness, they will wonder that they never noticed its presence before.

It is in his strictures on the *Pindaric Odes*, that Mr. Gosse speaks with cutting severity of their general harshness of rhythm ; nay, he does not hesitate to assert that Cowley's ear for rhythmical niceties was somewhat dull. To this criticism Cowley shall give his own answer in his own words :—" For as for the *Pindaric Odes*, I am in great doubt whether they will be understood by most readers ; nay, even by very many who are well enough acquainted with the common roads, and ordinary tracks of poesy. They either are, or at least were meant to be, of that kind of style which Dion Halicarasseus calls *μεγαλοφυνές* καὶ ἡδὺ μετὰ δεινότητος, and which he attributes to Alcaeus. The digressions are many and sudden, and sometimes long, according to the fashion of all lyrics, and Pindar above all men. The figures are unusual and bold even to temerity, and such as I durst not have to do withal in any other kind of poetry. The numbers are various and

irregular, and sometimes (especially some of the long ones) *seem harsh and uncouth*, if the *just measures and cadence be not observed in the pronunciation*. So that all their sweetness and numerosity (which is to be found, if I mistake not) lies in the manner wholly at the mercy of the reader."¹ That this quotation is a sufficient answer to Cowley's in a great measure appreciative critic, is not here affirmed. It is obvious that the author of the most unmusical lines can find in them the rhythmical music, which he intended, but failed to convey. But there is, after all, more in the plea than perhaps appears at first sight, and it at least points to the need of careful reading before a pronouncement is made upon the *Odes*. If this means of testing their rhythm be patiently used, unsuspected cadences of much sweetness will reveal themselves, which easily elude the patience of that class of reader, who thinks that all efforts in verse should of necessity possess the sweet simplicity of *We are Seven*. There is a solemn grandeur of subtle, yet sonorous rhythm to be found in almost all of the *Pindaric Odes*; but it will only disclose its hidden music to reading, and re-reading, and reading once more.

The extreme difficulty of most of these poems, which daunts all but Cowley's true lovers, does not lie so much in faulty rhythm as in the far-fetched conceits and extraordinary digressions, and long parentheses, and overcrowding of thoughts into a comparatively small space. Few readers are endowed with sufficient perseverance to keep their breath over a long parenthesis, which contains in itself gems of thought, but which are too numerous for their exact setting into the rest of the stanza. It is herein that Cowley's supreme difficulty of style consists; and with the birth of an easier school of what may be called naturalistic poetry, few readers will take the trouble to thread their way painfully through the often extremely intricate mazes of his thought. Modern students of poetry, like modern travellers, prefer the ways of study to be made easy to them by notes and other ingenious methods of supplying the place of brains in the reader. Hence, it came to pass that so early as the time of Pope, when the brilliant, but usually shallow heroic couplet held its artificial sway over the realms of the Sacred Nine, readers who were accustomed to have their thinking

¹ *Works* (1656), p. 8.

done for them, shrank back affrighted from the difficult task of mastering the subtleties of one of the most original thinkers amongst our bards. The same process of simplification of style, with notable exceptions, has continued to the present day; and if there are critics who can find little poetry in Cowley, there are readers, who are not critics, who fearlessly assert as an axiom that Robert Browning never wrote a line of poetry. The obscurity in Cowley consists, like the same fault in Chapman, in the rapidity of his thought, which requires uncommon quickness to follow, and especially at a time when his conceits, which belong essentially to their own day, are hard to understand. Like a strong runner the poet speeds far ahead, and the reader who is painfully panting after him up the mountain-side of Parnassus, is apt to stop breathless, exclaiming, "The fellow is no poet." But such criticism only betrays the critic's lack of perception and slowness of thought, and bears close resemblance to the sparrow, which is said to have asserted that the eagle was not a bird, because he himself could fly neither so fast nor so high.

That his *Odes* are laboured, Cowley's warmest admirers must admit; but that they are prevailingly harsh in their style and rhythm is neither axiomatic nor true. Nor can it fairly be said that their obscurity is impenetrable, or that they are dull to those who will take the trouble to thread the tangled jungle of their rich undergrowth of thought. Of the translations of Pindar himself it may be remarked that they are rather imitations than translations, and thus perhaps help to a better understanding of their original than would have been possible in a closer rendering. In his "Ode to the Muse," the poet sings in a multitude of conceits and remote images, but with considerable power:—

“Nor dost thou only dive so low,
But fly
With an unwearied wing the other way on high,
Where fates among the stars do grow;
There into the close nests of time dost peep,
And there with piercing eye,
Through the firm shell, and the thick white dost spy,
Years to come a-forming lie
Close in their sacred *secondine* asleep,
Till hatch'd by the sun's vital heat,
Which o'er them yet does brooding set,
They life and motion get;

And ripe at last with vigorous might
Break through the shell and take their everlasting flight.

And sure we may
The same too of the present say,
If past and future times do thee obey.
Thou stop'st this current, and dost make
This running river settle like a lake;
Thy certain hand holds fast the slippery snake.
The fruit which does so quickly waste,
Men scarce can see it, much less taste;
Thou *comfitest* in sweets, to make it last.
This shining piece of ice,
Which melts so soon away
With the sun's ray,
Thy verse does solidate and crystallise,
Till it a lasting mirror be.
Nay, thy immortal rhyme
Makes this one short point of time
To fill up half the orb of round eternity."¹

That, with the exception of the last line but one in the second stanza, there is sufficient lilt in the foregoing lines, will reveal itself to the patient reader; and the solemnity of the cadence, when once it makes itself felt, charms the ear with a profound sense of grandeur, which is not unlike the solemn music of Pindar himself. But that the conceits and similes in the stanzas are difficult and recondite must be freely admitted. Cowley laid time past and time present under contribution; nor did he shrink from the homeliest comparisons, if they harmonized with his intention. From the ancients he borrowed his conceit of the years hatching in the *nests of time*; but he has made his simile his own, and used it with much art and considerable effect. The comparisons employed in the second stanza to illustrate the power of poetry to confer immortality are so numerous and so quaint as to mar their real effectiveness. First, the muse freezes the river of time; secondly, her hand stops the fabled snake, which was supposed to devour itself, beginning at its own tail; thirdly, she encrusts the failing fruit of time in sugared lines; fourthly, she hardens the ice into a living mirror, which holds mortal deeds in immortality; and fifthly, she turns time into "half the orb of round eternity." Each one of these comparisons is quite apt in its place; but the poet's wit, perhaps, has led him astray in the introduction of the snake; yet even the snake is a powerful image of the passing of time. But their number is rather distracting;

¹ *Pindaric Odes* (1680), p. 24.

no sooner does one apt simile meet the reader, than another rises, and again another, until, like Æsop's rustic, he cannot see the wood for trees. It is in this piling up of loosely connected similes, in themselves apt and effective, but together not a little confusing, that Cowley has a tendency to weary his reader, and to mar the effect of his *Odes* as a whole.

The same wanton luxuriance of imagery, and the same elusive subtlety of thought, are to be found in the fine "Ode to Hobbes," of Malmesbury, the poet's firm friend, of which one touching stanza may be quoted with advantage in this place :—

"Nor can the snow, which now old age doth shed
 Upon thy reverend head,
 Quench or allay the noble fires within;
 But all which thou hast bin,
 And all that youth can be, thou'rt yet,
 So fully still dost thou
 Enjoy the manhood and the bloom of wit,
 And all the natural heat, but not the fever too.
 So contraries on Ætna's top conspire,
 Here hoary frosts, and by them breaks out fire.
 A secure peace the faithful neighbours keep,
 Th' embolden'd snow next to the flame does sleep.
 And if we weigh, like thee,
 Nature and cause, we shall see
 That thus it needs must be;
 To things immortal time can do no wrong,
 And that which never is to die, forever must be young."¹

Here the same wealth of imagination may be traced as in the stanzas already examined; but there is a quiet beauty and a tranquil music in the present lines which will be found in none of the rest of these *Odes*. Cowley, when he wrote of or to his friends, is commonly at his very best, and no finer tribute exists in our language to the famous author of *The Leviathan*. The like beauties, similar wealth of imagination, the quaint linking together of not always congruous conceits, the same abrupt transitions of rhythm which remind the musician of the so-called *discords* of Wagner, which are, moreover, filled with a solemn music, are distinguishing marks of Cowley's *Pindaric Odes*. They were the first, and by no means the worst, of their kind in the bounds of modern poetry. Inflated they may be, but Pindar himself was inflated, let his admirers say

¹ *Pindaric Odes*, "To Mr. Hobbes," stanza 6.

what they will, and his English imitator could hardly fail to follow his master.

But that the *Odes* contain poetry, and upon occasion poetry of a high order, no careful reader will deny. Cowley's imagination was luxuriant, but in the main its luxuriance was expressed in a severe and classical form. There is little of the dainty tenderness in him which is so often mistaken for great poetry. He was a thinker, and he set forth his thoughts with grave majesty and in rich abundance. In short, his excellences and defects in this class of writing are, on the whole, admirably summed up by Dryden, who, to a certain extent, exaggerates the absence of rhythmical sweetness, because of the absence of regularity of rhythm. "The seeming easiness of it," he says, "has made it spread ; but it has not been considered enough to be so well cultivated. It languishes in almost every hand but his (Cowley's), and some very few, whom (to keep the rest in countenance) I do not name. He indeed has brought it as near perfection as was possible in so short a time. But if I may be allowed to speak my mind modestly, and without injury to his sacred ashes, somewhat of the purity of English, somewhat of more equal thoughts, somewhat of sweetness in the numbers—in one word, somewhat of a finer turn and more lyrical verse is yet wanting. As for the soul of it, which consists in the warmth and vigour of fancy, the masterly figures and the copiousness of imagination, he has excelled all others in this kind."¹ That the affectionate ardour of a disciple carries Dryden away is manifest. He himself excelled his model in his "Alexander's Feast," and taught the Pindaric Ode a greater music than Cowley was able to infuse into its involved stanzas. But of Dryden and Pope it must never be forgotten that they had the advantage of beginning where their predecessor left off, and their productions in this kind do discredit neither to their great model nor to their own commanding genius. His fancy was, beyond a doubt, more varied and less monotonous than theirs, but his verse was at the same time less musical. Still, if his own caution concerning these *Odes* be borne in mind, much of their superficial harshness will disappear, and a deep-booming and sonorous music take its place.

The Mistress, which was published in 1647, was eagerly

¹ Dryden's *Miscellany*, Vol. II., preface.

welcomed in its own day, while now the collection of poems which it comprises is usually passed over as too dull to read. That this is a foolish course will appear hereafter. It may be that the general absence of furious passion and the far-fetched similes seem to show that Cowley had no real but an ideal mistress, whom it was his object to celebrate. Or it may be, as some have said,¹ that the poet was in love but once, and on that occasion never had the courage to declare himself. Indeed, the Odes themselves seem rather to have been exercises in love-poetry than written with any design to captivate a particular and obdurate fair one. Cowley himself gives what would appear to be the true explanation of their origin, when he says, "Poets are scarce thought Freemen of their Company, without paying some duties, and obliging themselves to be true to love. Sooner or later they must all pass through that trial, like some Mahometan monks that are bound by their order once at least in their life to make a pilgrimage to Mecca.

In furias ignemque ruunt; Amor omnibus idem.

But we must not always make a judgment of their manners from their writings of this kind, as the Romanists uncharitably do of Beza for a few lascivious sonnets composed by him in his youth. It is not in this sense that poesy is said to be a kind of painting; it is not the picture of the poet, but of things and persons imagined by him."² Again he continues near the same place: "Neither would I be misunderstood, as if I affected so much gravity, as to be ashamed to be thought really in love. On the contrary, I cannot have a good opinion of any man who is not at least capable of being so."³ These passages seem to show that, like Horace, he had passed through his stage of passion for some unknown Pyrrha, and could sing with the elder bard:—

"me tabula sacer
votiva paries indicat uvida
suspendisse potenti
vestimenta maris deo."

That this view is favoured by the sportive ballad,⁴ as he calls it, in which he gives a list of his mythical mis-

¹ Barnes, *Anacreon* (1705), p. xxxii.

² *Works* (1652), Preface, p. 9. ³ *Idem*, p. 10.

⁴ *Miscellanies*, pp. 22-24.

tresses, will be evident to those who study carefully its mocking lines; and no fact is more certain than that Cowley was anything but a Lovelace; nay, it is even said that when he retired to his rural retreat he developed Commodore Trunnion's terror and hatred of the gentler sex. Whatever may be the truth of this assertion, the probability remains that when he wrote *The Mistress* he loved no longer, and was thus able to look back upon his passed passion with as cool a philosophy as upon some event in ancient history. But this cooler point of view does not destroy the beauty of many of the poems, though for the most part they are remarkable for the absence of what is generally understood by passion. However that may be—and the point is disputable—it must be confessed that all men do not and cannot reach the boiling-point of the thermometer of love, and that natures of Cowley's reflective and solitary type may be allowed to express their raptures in a strain not absolutely feverous. But, in spite of the undoubted fact that his love, or at least his love-poetry, is conceived in the temperate zone rather than in the tropics, he has many delicate touches, and his quaint wit seldom forsakes him. In one of the most recondite of his images he pleads that, as the elements of his body have changed within five years, he cannot be expected to remain constant, since he is not the same person who originally fell in love—the pronouncement of a wit rather than a lover. He concludes the little poem thus:—

“The world's a scene of changes, and to be
Constant in nature were inconstancy;
For 'twere to break the laws herself has made:
Our substances themselves do fleet and fade;
The most swift being still does move and fly,
Swift as the wings of time 'tis measured by.
T' imagine then that love should never cease
(Love, which is but the ornament of these)
Were quite as senseless as to wonder why
Beauty and colour stays not when we die.”¹

That the sentiment of these lines is that of a philosopher rather than that of a lover may be true enough, but that does not hinder their general truth, while in the main they are full of a quiet, meditative music which could only have had its birth in one who had himself proved

¹ *The Mistress*, “Inconstancy,” p. 11.

the melancholy fact that the poet's love does not endure for ever.

With greater passion Cowley begins another ode, which has in it something of the spirit and power of Catullus,—

“Love in her sunny eyes does basking play;
Love walks the pleasant mazes of her hair;
Love does on both her lips for ever stray,
And sows and reaps a thousand kisses there.”¹

These are the lines of one who had known what it was to love with no small degree of passion; and the pathetic, almost despairful, tone of the whole of the poem speaks of passion unrequited and vain aspirations. At one time Cowley really appears to have longed for a tender Phyllis to share his solitude, and he has expressed his desire in the following beautiful stanzas, which are neither dull nor feeble:—

“Well, then, I now do plainly see,
This busy world and I shall ne’er agree;
The very honey of all earthly joy
Does of all meats the soonest cloy.
And they, methinks, deserve my pity
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd, and buzz, and murmurings
Of this great hive, the city.

“Ah! yet, ere I descend to th’ grave,
May I a small house and large garden have!
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise and both delightful too!
And since love ne’er will from me flee,
A mistress moderately fair,
And good as guardian angels are,
Only belov’d, and loving me.

“Oh! fountains, when in you shall I
Myself eas’d of unpeaceful thoughts espy?
Oh! fields. Oh! woods, when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade?
Here’s the spring-head of pleasures flood,
Where all the riches lie that she
Has coin’d and stamp’d for good.

“Pride and ambition here
Only in far-fetch’d metaphors appear;
Here naught but winds can hurtful murmurs scatter,
And naught but echo flatter.
The gods, when they descended hither
From heav’n, did always choose their way;
And therefore we may boldly say,
That it’s the way too thither.

¹ *The Mistress*, “Inconstancy,” p. 11.

"How happy here should I,
 And one dear she live, and embracing die?
 She who is all the world, and can exclude
 In deserts solitude.
 I should have then this only fear,
 Lest men, when they my pleasures see,
 Should hither throng, to live like me,
 And so make a city here."¹

There is the ring of true poetry and of true love in these beautiful lines. Wearied out with the heat and blare of the city, the poet longs for solitude according to his wont; but, what is less usual with him, he would have that solitude shared by one who would charm away loneliness even from a desert. It is sad that Cowley's full wish was not granted, and he must have missed the sweet companionship of one who could have filled his retirement with dear delight. The whole collection of odes contains many isolated stanzas of rare beauty, and there is not a stanza in any poem which does not contain at least one supremely beautiful line. That quaint and far-fetched conceits weary the modern reader, who cannot project himself back into the past, is certain; but in spite of these, and in spite of occasional metrical crudities, the collection of poems as a whole, and in its parts, contains much true poetry and not a little true love of a quieter kind than the poets of more fervid passion delight to pour forth in a glowing stream of exaggerated verse. In the coolness of his passion Cowley bears some resemblance to Wordsworth:—

"But there,
 I doubt, all likeness ends between the pair."

Of his *Davideis* little need be said at this place: the epic was planned, and for the most part written, while the poet was sojourning at the two Universities; and though parts of it are filled with much beauty of imagery, and there are occasional snatches of genuine music, it is on the whole prosaic in character. The heroic couplet which he uses he found rough-hewn; and though his verse does not flow with the saccharine smoothness of that of Waller, there can be no question that he did much to prove the capabilities of that kind of metre. At all events he left many of its uncouth blemishes behind, and thus was of great service to Dryden and Pope, who carried the afore-

¹ *The Mistress*, "The Wish," pp. 22-23.

said couplet to a monotonous perfection, The poem was originally intended to have filled twelve books, after the pattern of Virgil's *Æneid*; but the troubles of the times disturbed the author and only four were finished. In his preface to the first edition of his collected works, Cowley pleads that it would be good for poets to turn their attention to the composition of *divine poems*; that is, to poems based upon divinity. But though he uttered severe strictures upon Francis Quarles, who had already failed in this branch of the poetic art, it cannot be justly said that he himself was much more successful. The reader feels that the poem in question is too long, before he has waded through the first book, and the abundance of conceits, here as elsewhere, does not accord with the dignity of the theme. Fuller, the Church historian, had tried his prentice-hand at the same subject, and with even less success. Nor can it be said that any attempts to render the *Psalms* of David and the rest of Hebrew poetry into English verse have met with a great measure of success. Milton himself was unable to do justice to the grandeur of his originals or, indeed, to himself in his efforts to translate several of the *Psalms*; and he had more genius than all the poets put together, who have tried and failed in so arduous an undertaking. Cowley rendered the first book of his *Davideis* into Latin, and the translation, though not untainted by artificiality, runs with more verve and vigour in stately hexameters than in rugged English decasyllables. Whether or not he felt conscious of his failure, Cowley tried seldom to translate the Bible into English verse and worse for the future, a forbearance for which his admirers will feel grateful to him. It is not that there are not passages of much beauty scattered over the *Davideis*, but the poem as a whole must be pronounced a failure both as a poem, and as an attempt to make an epic of a part of the Sacred History.

Cowley's Latin poems are scholarly, copious, and, in most cases, metrically exact. Thoroughly soaked with the poets of ancient Italy, he was able to reproduce and to use as his own much of their manner and all of their metres. His *Six Books of Plants* must always be considered a wonderful monument of the author's industry, and a testimony to his accurate scholarship. His botany may be far from perfect; but his poetry is strong, nervous, and varied, and the modern reader may easily do worse

than devote some little study to a work of so much interest and so many beauties. Cowley handled the Latin language with almost as much ease as he displayed in his writing of English prose, than which no higher commendation can be bestowed. Of this prose sufficient examples have been given in the quotations already taken from the prefaces to his works, and from his fine essay *Of Myself*. But this much must be said for all his essays, that in them he handled his mother-tongue with greater ease than Milton, and with a forcible simplicity and a quiet humour which cannot fail to charm all lovers of good writing. He is one of those authors who have laid the foundations of our prose deep in naturalness of expression and artless vigour of language. Amongst the ablest of his prose works, from his own point of view, is his fierce attack upon Oliver Cromwell, in his famous *Vision*. No more trenchant and biting criticism of the great Protector has appeared in our literature. The honesty of the writer is conspicuous in every line, and he gathers force as he proceeds like a stream, until in the end his invective swells into a rushing torrent. That any should have suspected him of lack of loyalty after such an effusion as this, convicts his accusers of envious insincerity, and the King of unpardonable levity in paying the slightest heed to their malignant spite. Those who can patiently read that with which they do not agree, and who can at the same time admire its vigour as it deserves, will be compelled to admit that the *Vision* is one of the most powerful pieces of writing in our language. Nor can those poor-spirited partisans, who are impatient of anything in the way of reproach of their idols, be ranked under the noble but often discredited name of critic. Cowley put his whole soul into this satire or invective, for it partakes of the nature of both ; and though the verses with which it is interspersed are not of a high order, the prose is subtle, delicate, witty, fierce, sonorous, and eminently forcible.

One faculty of the poet has received little attention ; he had unusual depths of affection in his friendships, and no elegies over departed friends are more tender and touching than those of Abraham Cowley. His poem on the *Death of Crashaw* is so truthful and pathetic, that it must be left to the reader to search it out and read for himself. The saintly divine was an intimate friend of Cowley's, who knew the strength and the weakness of his character,

and who spoke of him with an affectionate feeling, which is not too common in epitaphic literature. Similar in power and tenderness is his *Ode on the Death of William Harvey*. Both this and the above-mentioned poem, and indeed all others of a similar description, reveal a depth of human affection, and a simplicity and purity of poetical expression, such as could not be easily surpassed. His translations too, or imitations, deserve the praise of Doctor Johnson, which has been already quoted. In most cases he succeeded in getting at the sense of his author, and of making the reader perceive it too. His rhythm may here and there be defective; but that fault is more than compensated by the vigour and fitness of his language. At literalness he never aimed, for he understood, what many translators have failed to recognise, that his duty was to make one language speak the thoughts of another. Yet some of his versions can easily be rendered back into their original tongues, a fact which affords convincing proof that he preserved their meaning, if not their exact expressions. Examples of these need not be given here, as they are somewhat beyond the scope of this essay: but those who will read his translations from Anacreon will perforce allow that they are no less unmusical than accurate.

To return once more to his life, before summing up the foregoing attempt at criticism:—Cowley, soon after his return from France, appears to have been so convinced that the Protectorate was fixed for all time, that he had intended to retire to the plantations of North America—not to make money, but to escape from that political turmoil which had so long vexed his peace-loving spirit. Lack of the needful funds alone seems to have prevented him from carrying out this pious wish. But no one can regret that he was forced to remain in England, since that was the availing cause of his touching biography from the pen of Bishop Sprat. Moreover, he wrote one or two immortal essays, including especially that which bears the title of *A Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy*, or, in other words, of natural science. He appears to have been associated with Evelyn in an attempt to found a college for this purpose, or at least to propound a workable scheme. This scheme is left behind, though the college is still *in nubibus*, at least in the form in which Cowley conceived it. It is just possible

that Charles, who was a lover of science, was inspired by some of its carefully drawn up details to form the Royal Society, of which both Evelyn and Pepys were Fellows. But of this there is no certain evidence, and no dogmatic declaration will be made. Prompted by a scrupulousness more estimable than welcome, Sprat refrained from publishing Cowley's familiar letters, which could not fail to have thrown much light upon this scheme among other matters, and which must have given an insight into the man himself and into his doings after his retirement. But whether Cowley had any share in the founding of the Royal Society or not, the subject of his essay was one after his own heart, and he would gladly have seen established the college, which he recommended and constituted according to his plan.

And now it remains to sum up the whole matter, as briefly as may be, and to endeavour to lift Cowley once more to the throne from which he has been lightly and carelessly deposed by changeful taste and superficial inappreciation. As a man, all the authorities are in accord. He was pious, without a touch of affectation; witty, without a spark of vanity; learned, without pedantic display; a true friend and honest politician, and a simple and retiring personality, whose goodness was as marked as his modesty. His friends, who were few and select, loved him with almost a passionate affection; it was their delight to visit him in his retreat, whither he had gone with much force of mind, leaving behind him the pomp in which he had shared, and a Court, which, if tardily grateful, was a veritable Tom Tiddler's Ground, where gold and silver might be freely gathered. In his loyalty to his unhappy master and to the Queen, in and out of exile, in his exact fidelity, in dangerous missions, and in intimate correspondence in his active political life, in the quiet of Kent, where he was employed in studying the nature which he loved, in his early precocity, and in his rich genius, he passed through active life longing for the tranquillity of solitude; yet when solitude came at last, he had not many years wherein to enjoy its sweets. Too modest to insist upon the hardly-earned recompense of his patient and faithful service, he suffered himself willingly to be jostled aside by greedier and less deserving applicants. And he passed away in the full maturity of his powers at the early age of forty-nine. How much the world is

the poorer by his premature death can never be known now ; but the students of poetry have not shown themselves adequately kind to his memory to attract readers to what he has left.

That his style has much to do with his undeserved neglect is as certain as the fact that that very style procured him instantaneous popularity in his own day. The generation which immediately preceded his had many poets ; but few of them, save Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton, had much backbone of thought to give solidity as well as beauty to their poetical productions. They wrote, too, for the most part in that luxuriant softness which they had learned especially from John Fletcher, and which was the very antithesis of Cowley's more pithy and thoughtful style. They flowed along easily and gently, as poets should, if they can contrive it ; while he had many rocks and barriers impeding the full stream of his rich and varied imagination. Their inspiration was perhaps somewhat slight, while his mind was filled with profound and varied thoughts of his own, in addition to those which he had culled from the ancient literature of Greece and Rome. Hence was born his pithy and antithetical style, his heaping up thought upon thought and image upon image, his rejection of no comparison, however strange, if it satisfactorily expressed his meaning, his multitude of sparkling conceits and his deceitfully simple language, which veiled his subtle and elusive faculty of perception. The phenomenon was so entirely new, that the reading public of his day was struck spell-bound, and the older poets were abandoned for their learned successor. The remarkable precocity of his youthful muse, whose wings increased in strength with every year of his life, formed an additional attraction which, for two generations, captivated the taste of thoughtful readers. Of his surprising originality there can be no doubt, a circumstance which was soon perceived and gladly welcomed. The peculiar nature of his wit, too, was of the kind to commend itself to the curious of his day. Wit is almost always the child of its own period, whereas humour is born for the ages. With the passing of time and the changes of fashion, Cowley's wit is not so easily perceptible by the general body of readers of the present. Conceits of the kind which abound in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, and which are no less abundant, though by no means so delicately

contrived, throughout Cowley's poems, offend modern taste, though why they should do so of necessity it is not easy to explain. Perhaps the reason is because they reveal tokens of self-conscious effort, while the polish of so finished a poetic artist as Tennyson, though it be the result of extreme labour, presents the appearance of supreme ease to the uncritical reader.

Furthermore, Cowley's rhythm, though not so unmusical as some of his critics would have us believe, requires more care than even students are disposed to bestow upon it, if it is to be correctly apprehended. That his ear was not of the finest may perhaps be admitted; but that there is an undertone of solemn music in almost all of his poems is a fact which gradually reveals itself to all who are capable of catching its quiet melody. The absence of passion, too, in most of his verses has not helped to preserve his popularity down to the present generation, whose delight is equally divided between the spiritualization of nature, or the torrent force of unrestrained emotion. Some, too, are not free from an injudicious and uncritical love of musical platitudes, which indeed make up a considerable mass of modern poetical literature. In Cowley there is little of commonplace and less of platitude. In his desire to avoid this harmless but uninteresting class of poetry, he fell into the opposite tendency of straining after effect by the linking together of extremely exalted pieces of imagery. His luxuriance of thought does not, however, usually display itself in luxuriance of language. Hence it comes about that the depth of his thought peeps shyly and provokingly forth from an extreme simplicity of expression, as if some unknown being were to masquerade in the skin of a being familiar to all. These are some of the difficulties which beset the poet's style, and it must be confessed that sometimes they are so numerous as to be not a little irritating. But a modicum of perseverance and patience will reveal creations of unsuspected beauty and striking originality. Granted that he is laboured, he is not laboured because of the deficiency, but on account of the almost riotous superabundance of his thought, and it is owing to the excess of originality that his meaning is most frequently missed.

To what rank, then, in the hierarchy of poets does Abraham Cowley rightly belong? He certainly is not

a metaphysical poet, as Doctor Johnson asserts. Let any one compare him with bards of the type of Mark Akenside, and he will be found to have as little in common with their method, either of regarding a subject or of setting down their ideas, as they themselves have in common with such a poet as Byron. That he is a poet of fancy would perhaps be a truer description of his peculiar gifts. His similes are fanciful, his imagery is the offspring of fancy, his comparisons are based upon fanciful resemblances often strained to the point of cracking, and his very metres are the creations of a luxuriant but wayward fancy. Scarcely two of his poems are written in the same metre: Cowley made his lines to fit his sense, and not his sense to fit his lines; so that the reader is never led into high estimation of nonsense from the beauty of the rhythm in which it is couched. Every line of his has its full meaning, and every line fits into its proper place in its own particular poem. Hence he is often not easy to read, and his rhythm is no less difficult to detect. But once detected, and such detection is by no means impossible, it haunts the memory like an old song heard in early childhood. Cowley, then, is a poet of the fancy, endowed with a rich and fruitful imagination, whose rank as a poet is beyond a doubt with the immortals, though his appreciation in the present age of hurry and inattention is more than doubtful. Some patient students know and love his intricate mazes of thought; while others honour him for his forcible and dainty prose, as well as for his amiable life and his stainless loyalty. Some readers, too, are attracted to him by what they are pleased to term his quaint style. A strong protest must be here entered against the abuse of this word *quaint* by uncritical minds, who see what they are pleased to term quaintness in all the older writers of our literature. That Cowley was occasionally quaint must be admitted; but he was not quaint because he wrote in the seventeenth century, but because of his remarkable wit. As a man, a poet, and a prose author of much distinction, who in each capacity has earned well-deserved honour, he merits loving admiration and patient study from those, whose delight it is to linger over the varied pages of forgotten poetry.

THE TRAVELLER

THOMAS CORYATE

"Cælum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt."
HORACE, *Epist.* I. xii. 27.

INNOCENT eccentricity is the unfailing sport of commonplace conventionality, and inoffensive vanity not seldom proves the fruitful source of infinite mirth to unsympathetic spirits. Yet eccentricity is not the positive proof of ignorance, nor is vanity the invariable sign of a shallow soul: the former failing is as commonly the token of suppressed originality as the latter is the flimsy veil of conscious but unappreciated worth. The eccentricities of one generation are the ordinary pursuits of another, and let a man be so unhappy as to be but a few years before his time, and he will not easily escape from the jibes of those who are so tied by conventional red-tape, that they cannot conceive of any wisdom lying beyond the limited scope of their own imagination. Contemporary recognition of merit, when that merit is wrapped up in quaint garments, is as uncommon as the oddities which characterize its unfortunate possessor, who must perforce wait for posterity to pronounce a fairer judgment upon his aspirations and their realization than is possible during his lifetime. True fame is, alas! only too often the posthumous acknowledgment of the mistakes of contemporary arrogance, and resembles a laudatory epitaph set over an innocent man, who was hanged for a crime which he did not commit. Some are honoured in their life; but these are not uncommonly those men of merely average merit, who have not the courage to soar above the narrow range of the ideas of their particular time, but who in spite of their limitations do no inconsiderable service according to the extent of their ability. But when a man is born into the world, who is endowed with some originality, he is looked upon first with suspicion, next with



TOM CORYATE.

From the 1811 Reprint of his "Crudities."



curiosity, and finally with respect, and well for him if that respect be not shown too late.

But there are some men of conspicuous originality, who fail to win their due in their own generation and from the grudging approbation of posterity. The British character is homœopathic in its doses of praise, but copious enough and to spare in its distribution of censure. The men of succeeding generations are apt to be misled by the pragmatistical and often unjust judgments of the great contemporaries who lived too near the objects of their spleen to be able to view them with dispassionate eyes. A great man's epigram had served to blast for centuries the well-deserved fame of men of high originality, be they great or small ; and Pope's ill-natured line—

“And Cromwell damned to everlasting fame,”

has served for nearly a century to violate the memory of one of the greatest of Englishmen. The *Epigrams* of Martial, and the savage satires of the author of the *Dunciad*, have done much to corrupt the judgment and to stimulate the censure of succeeding ages. Yet it must be remembered that, in spite of the bitter pleasantry of these poets of high genius but of much malice, some at least of the objects of their pitiless lampoons have suffered undeservedly. That Addison and Bentley have outlived the venomous criticism of Pope is as true as that they never merited the waspish poet's stinging condemnation. Nor is contemporary satire wiser than its predecessor in this respect. If Butler, in his *Hudibras*, cast ridicule upon the external deformities of a great and deeply religious movement, there are still some satirists left in this impartial century of ours, who have been no less witty and even more unjust. It is therefore a necessary but difficult task to strip off the mud of satire from the image of a past worthy, if a correct estimate of his place in the temple of fame is to be attained. Yet the labour is hard ; the delicious grotesqueness of the bespattered image provokes the critic's sympathetic amusement to such an extent, that he finds it almost impossible to be just. It is easier to laugh than to judge with impartiality ; but for all that it is necessary first to consider whether the object of our laughter is after all so laughable, before we estimate his real character.

That Thomas Coryate was one of those eccentric men

who suffer much at the hands of a self-sufficient and superior generation cannot be denied; that he did not deserve the excess of the hard measure which he received is equally true. It is not for a moment contended that he was one of the world's greatest sons; but if a man, who proved himself to be a careful and observant traveller, missing nothing and setting down what he saw with rigid truth and in a vigorous if rather prolix style, justly merits the title of a great traveller, there cannot be the slightest doubt that Coryate was a great traveller. Nay, if the truth must be spoken, he was among the greatest of those who have travelled to vast distances at the expense of hard labour, with the sole object of learning the habits of foreign nations. He was a seventeenth century Herodotus, endowed with the subtle powers of observation and the artless simplicity of his great predecessor; yet gifted with a pinch of English shrewdness, which did not always characterize the garrulous old Greek. If his style of setting down the story of his experiences is by no means so picturesque as that of the elder traveller, his observations are as accurate, and the range of his journeys is infinitely more extensive. Furthermore, he was not so often misled by the fables of priests, and by the marvels of tradition, as was Herodotus in a simpler age. Yet a king, who was himself fittingly nicknamed by a contemporary statesman "the wisest fool in Christendom," could without hesitation style the harmless traveller a fool in plain terms; while that sapient monarch's commonplace ambassador had as little hesitation in slandering a wiser man than himself as "a very honest poor wretch." Of such worth and weight is the indiscriminating censure of contemporary wiseacres. That Coryate deserved neither the one title nor the other, except in that he accommodated himself to the humours of an extravagant and foolish court, and that he travelled to please himself, it is the object of the following pages to put beyond a doubt.

The father of this able and observant, but certainly whimsical "leg stretcher," as he called himself, was the Reverend George Coryate,¹ who became Fellow of New College in Oxford in 1562, and whose Latin poetry had won him many admirers in the reign of Elizabeth. In 1570 he was presented to the rectory of Odcombe, near

¹ Wood (Bliss), Vol. I. cols. 774, 775.

Evil, or Yeovil, in Somersetshire, where in 1594 he received the prebend of War-hill in the Cathedral Church of York. His Latin poems were not published until after his death, when they appeared in his son's first book. The Christian name of his wife was Gertrude, though her maiden name does not appear to be known, and at Odcombe their son Thomas was born in 1587.¹ He was gifted with few of the endowments of his father, which had gained him the reputation of a scholar of some compass; but his memory was of that tenacious kind, which is of so much assistance in the acquisition of languages. At the beginning of 1596 he was entered at Gloucester Hall in Oxford, where, says Wood, "continuing about three years, he attained by the help of a great memory to some competency in logic, but more by far in the Greek tongue and in humane learning."² Coryate's proficiency in Greek would no doubt serve to increase his natural desire for travelling, by forming his acquaintance with Herodotus, whose stimulating pages can hardly have failed to be his delight. There is no record of his having taken a degree, and at the age of twenty-two he left a University, where he could hardly have been at home, to spend several years in enforced idleness. His father, according to the practice of the clergy of that time, had destined him for the Church, in which he had sufficient interest to make his son's future livelihood secure. But Tom's career at Oxford had ended without the first necessary step towards preferment, and the elder Coryate was thus doomed to disappointment.

No record of the young man's earlier life has been preserved; but it is not difficult to picture what it must have been. He must have spent his days between poring over his books and wandering about the lovely lanes of Somersetshire with an insatiable longing in his soul to see other lands than his own. So, too, he could hardly fail to have been cultivating his powers of observation, which reached to a more remarkable keenness with every year of his life. It may be that he confided the secret of his longings to his mother; for he could scarcely have taken his father, who would look upon him as a failure, into his confidence in this respect. The elder Coryate had prospered in the Church, and it would be no small annoyance and dis-

¹ Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol. II. cols. 208-214.

² *Idem ibidem*, col. 208.

appointment to him to have a son utterly unlike other young men, who had thrown away good opportunities of winning similar prosperity. Sometimes Tom would take his way to the neighbouring market town of Yeovil, where he must have met with merchants, who had seen the lands which he earnestly desired to see: and his aspirations would be quickened, until they had almost reached the pitch of strong determination to visit the places, of which he heard them talking, before he died. Nor was it likely that his father's friends or his mother's gossips would understand the strange and wayward youth, who spent much time alone, and who scorned the ordinary pursuits of his comrades as mere waste of time. If at a later period the learned, who by education were qualified to appreciate his abilities, failed to penetrate beneath the surface of his eccentricity to the true man, it was not to be expected that he would be held in any high estimation by the less learned, whose aspirations were chiefly directed to the main chance, and who could not but look upon him as a conspicuous failure in life.

When then Coryate was sent to London in the hope of finding a fortune in the great city, he would receive his father's decision with great joy and a heart-felt sense of relief. He certainly did not succeed in gaining the object of his journey; but attracted by the scholarly reputation of the king he found his way to Court possibly by the introduction of Ben Jonson, where he became little more than a hanger-on of the train of Prince Henry. In this undignified capacity he contrived to catch sufficient crumbs from the royal table to feed his hungry body, and he was no longer a burden to his parents, to whom he must have sent letters describing his doings, which would be read all round about his home. This may be inferred from his later practice, for Tom was a good son, who never forgot to inform his mother of his experiences when his wanderings led him farther afield. Cherishing his unrevealed aspiration, he starved himself to procure sufficient money to enable him to see the world; and his fantastic humour, sometimes consciously adopted, at other times the delightful result of unconscious vanity, made him little better than a learned Court-fool. That he was much more than a mere jester will be seen hereafter; but that he did lend himself to that harmless but inglorious rôle to serve his own ends is comparatively certain. But many who have

made the rash experiment have found by bitter experience that their folly is remembered, while their real gifts are forgotten. That such has been Coryate's fate is shown by the shallow mockery of those who were in daily contact with him, and who might have seen enough of him to have judged him with greater justice. But witty pronouncements come more readily to the tongue than weightier words, and, like many a better man, Coryate has suffered from a fate which his own unwise conduct brought down upon him.

But it must be admitted that Tom showed himself wise in one respect at least, in that he accommodated himself to his circumstances with an inexhaustible good humour, which derived much assistance from his vanity. Had he perceived the full sting of the jibes with which he was assailed, he must have been deeply mortified ; and often when he fancied that the company of his persecutors were laughing with him, they were doubtless laughing at him. Much of his whimsical humour displayed itself in the utterance of extravagant speeches, over-loaded with ill-digested learning and couched in the most sonorous language of that highfalutin age. But one problem remains still unsolved, as to whether he was sometimes laughing in his sleeve at the easy mirth of his listeners, or whether he was really as profoundly impressed, as they believed, with a high opinion of his own learning. That the former alternative is at least not improbable may be inferred from the shrewd common sense which continually displayed itself during his travels. But there can be no doubt that he was at the same time influenced by a very real and delightfully harmless vanity. In some respects he resembles Shakespeare's Don Armado, though a more distinguished parentage has been rightly assigned to that supreme coxcomb. But in spite of his generally successful attempts to provoke mirth, it would seem probable, from his invariable readiness to enter into the humour of every odd situation, that he upon occasion befooled the Philistines who made him their jest, and that to the full as frequently as they befooled him. So shrewd an observer, where his vanity was not touched, could scarcely fail to see through the folly of those who played him tricks, and though they put japes upon him, he was often able to hoist the tricksters with their own petard.

It is more than probable that it was during this period

of his life, and not in the midst of his continental travels, that he was enclosed in a trunk for some ludicrous purpose, possibly to satirise Iachimo in *Cymbeline*. It is true that in his mock-heroic panegyric to Coryate's *Crudities*, his friend, Laurence Whitaker, represents him as undergoing this temporary imprisonment at Basle, and assigns a humorous reason for it:—

“Yet must I say, thy fortune herein was ill;
For thou went'st nak't to wash thy shirt at Basel;
And having seen cloisters, and many a monk,
Becam'st thyself a recluse in a trunk.”

But another of his mock-panegyrists gives another and probably a truer version of the trunk incident, namely, Richard Goodyer, who says:—

“If any think Tom dull and heavy, know,
The Court and City's mirth cannot be so:
Who thinks him light, ask them who had the task
To bear him in a *trunk* unto the masque.”¹

That this is the truer story can scarcely be doubted; Coryate in Switzerland would have found it easier to creep into bed than to esconce himself within a trunk, nor would he have been likely to play the fool where there were no sympathetic witnesses. Moreover, there is an allusion to something like this episode, though not in express terms, in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Love Restored*.² When Plutus as Cupid bids Robin Goodfellow depart, since he cannot be admitted at Court, that amusing personage replies, “If I had not been a spirit I had been mazarded. Though I confess I am none of those subtle ones that can creep through at a key-hole, or the cracked pane of a window. I must come in at a door, which made me once think of a *trunk*; but that I would not imitate so catholic a coxcomb as Coryate.” The uncertainty of the date at which this *Masque* was performed renders a final conclusion impossible. But its evidence, taken together with the lines of Sir Henry Goodyer just quoted, makes it almost certain that it was during one of these

¹ For these quotations *vide* the fine first edition of Coryate's *Crudities* in the Chetham Library, Manchester, *Introduction* under the names of the respective panegyrists, there being no pagination in this part of the book.

² Jonson's *Works* (1853); Moxon, pp. 588–589. N.B.—*Mazarded* means *knocked on the head*. Cf. Nichols' *Progresses of James I.* (1828), Vol. II., p. 400.

Court entertainments that Coryate was carried in in a trunk, to the huge delight of James and his giddy-pated courtiers. It was just the kind of harmless frolic to which he would be ready enough to lend himself; and Whitaker, with such an incident in his mind, would not hesitate to alter date and scene to suit his comic purpose.

But if Coryate really did suffer such temporary inconvenience in Switzerland, this much at all events is quite certain, that the courtiers of Prince Henry's lively train did not hesitate to amuse themselves, and possibly the silly old sovereign too, with similar pieces of horse-play at honest Tom's expense and with his hearty consent. Some men would rather be kicked than passed by without notice, while others do not hesitate to play the fool to raise momentary laughter. One of the latter was Coryate, who was not harmed by his dramatic entrance into the Court, and who would doubtless gain some golden crumbs of comfort from the Prince's munificence to console him for his temporary seclusion. During his present sojourn at Court it is comparatively certain that he was laying by all the money which he could spare to further that object of foreign travel which was never absent from his mind. Always a moderate man, alike in his requirements and their satisfaction, he would hoard small sums wrung painfully by his witticisms from the Prince and his less bountiful train. Indeed, there is something inexpressibly touching in the picture of this distinctly able man who bravely endured the flouts of mockers and the jeers of the frivolous, that by thus accommodating himself to the extravagant humours of his patrons, he might at some future time have scraped together sufficient money to enable him to gratify a long-cherished desire. He soon perceived the way to get what he needed, and he never shrunk from pursuing it to the bitter end with a resolute persistence that is rare in life. Nor can the Court be commended for its horse-play, or for the choice of its victim in its most frequent pranks. If honest Tom were a vainer man than most of the men, the king alone excepted, who laughed him to scorn, he at least had quite as good a reason for his vanity as they had for theirs. He was truly learned, if excessively fantastic; and what is more, he was a purer man than the great majority of those who haunted that dissolute Court. That he was able to adapt himself to the whims of so supreme a

coxcomb as James and of so wild a springald as Prince Henry speaks much for his instinctive knowledge of human nature, though we can well imagine that he would be heartily rejoiced when he saw his little fund of savings steadily growing, and that he flung off with uncommon delight his often painful part of the prince's jester.

At length, in 1608, he saw the opportunity of temporary escape from his lowly, if exciting, Court functions, and he went down like a dutiful son to bid his parents farewell before he set out upon a journey from which he might never return. At Odcombe he would now be received as a person of great distinction. The glamour cast over him by his London life would serve to fling a glorified veil over his undoubted eccentricities. In those days it meant something to have a relative employed in any service in or about the Court, and all his old friends, who may have scorned him before, would now gather round him to see and bid farewell to the departing lion. It required no common courage at the beginning of the seventeenth century to set out to travel alone through Europe, when thieves of every kind infested most of the roads, and when even those who were able to make their journeys by coach or on horseback were subject to grave inconvenience and positive danger. Coryate had to carry the whole of his small supply of money about his person, and though his way-worn appearance might save him from the tender mercies of the more lordly of the "clerks of St. Nicholas," he could hardly hope to escape from their meaner brethren, who did not disdain such small fry as himself. He was not, however, a man to be deterred from his great object in life by any dangers, real or imaginary. The hunger for travel was gnawing at his very soul, and nothing but travel could allay his pangs. That his desire to see foreign parts seemed strange to his friends and relatives, when he had an assured position at Court, cannot be doubted; but they little knew what that position was, or perhaps they might have appreciated his desire more justly. Moreover, the inhabitants of a country village are by nature stay-at-home people, by whom every traveller is looked upon as a wonderful object or as a restless fool.

Coryate's insatiable curiosity is well expressed in the picture drawn of him at a later period by one who knew him intimately. "He was a man of a very coveting eye,

that could never be satisfied with seeing, as Solomon speaks (*Eccles.* i. 8), though he had seen very much ; and I am persuaded that he took as much content in seeing as many others in the enjoying of great and rare things. He was a man that had got the mastery of many hard languages to the Latin and Greek he brought forth of England with him ; in which if he had obtained wisdom to husband and manage them, as he had skill to speak them, he had deserved more fame in his generation. But his knowledge and high attainments in several languages made him not a little ignorant of himself, he being so covetous, so ambitious of praise, that he would endure and hear more of it than he could in any measure deserve ; being like a ship that hath too much sail and too little ballast. Yet if he had not fallen into the smart hands of the wits of those times, he might have passed better. That itch of fame which engaged this man to the undertakings of those very hard, and long, and dangerous travels, hath put thousands more (and therefore he was not alone in this) into strange attempts only to be talked of.”¹ On these strictures, which are upon the whole truthful and comparatively fair, that the last is not exactly just can hardly be doubted ; Coryate’s first impulse was an eager thirsting after foreign sights and the seeing of other nations than his own. But when he had achieved his object at the cost of no small danger and trouble, he was naturally anxious that his efforts should receive their due appreciation.

He set out in 1608 upon his travels ; but let him speak for himself :—“I was embarked at Dover,” he says, “about ten of the clock in the morning, the fourteenth of May, being Saturday and Whitsun Eve, anno 1608, and arrived at Calais . . . about five of the clock in the afternoon, after I had varnished the exterior parts of the ship with the excremental ebullitions of my tumultuous stomach, as desiring to satiate the gormandising paunches of the hungry haddocks (according as I have hieroglyphically expressed it in the front of my book) with that wherewith I had superfluously stuffed myself at land, having made my rumbling belly their capacious aumbrie.”² So he

¹ Terry, *Voyage to East India*, published in 1655, and reprinted in 1777, pp. 67, 68.

² *Crudities* (1611), p. 1. Coryate is referring to one of the compartments of the engraved title-page, when he speaks of his hieroglyphics, in which

started upon his travels with that usual prelude of active nausea which is so well known to adventurous tourists who cross the Straits of Dover. As was his wonted practice, he spent some little time in examining the sights of the town, of which he gives a few brief historical and antiquarian notes. He does not appear to have stretched his legs with unwonted rapidity, for we find him occupying eight hours in walking sixteen miles from Calais to Boulogne. Doubtless he saw everything by the way, and the quotations inserted from time to time in the text will clearly show the keenness of his powers of observation. On the seventeenth of May he arrived at Montreuil, on his route by way of Amiens to Paris, and at every step of his journey he kept his eyes about him, so that nothing missed his careful scrutiny. "About two miles this side of Montreuil," he says, "there was a Whitsuntide fool disguised like a fool, wearing a long coat, wherein there were many several pieces of cloth of divers colours, at the corners whereof there hung the tails of squirrels; he bestowed a little piece of plate, wherein was expressed the *effigies* of the Virgin Mary, upon every one that gave him money; for he begged money of all travellers for the benefit of the parish church."¹ That Coryate did not receive the small piece of plate is probable, for he was too sturdy a Protestant to give any of his scanty money to the Church of Rome. But he did not pay attention merely to such characters as this, nor to the architectural and antiquarian objects of interest in the various towns through which he passed. Anything which was out of the common attracted his curious fancy, and he did not pass by what many would esteem nothing but trifles. "The fairest cage of birds that I saw in all France," he tells his readers, "was at the sign of the *Ave Maria* in Amiens; the workmanship whereof was very curious gilt wires. In the same were four turtle-doves, and many goldfinches, with other birds, which are such as our hemp-seed birds in England."² It will at once be noticed that Coryate only adopts his highfalutin style when he is attempting to be witty; matters of

he is represented as deadly sick, with the fishes on the surface of the sea. By *aumbrie* he means the same thing as *armoire*. N.B.—All the quotations and references given below are taken from the unique and perfect copy of the *Crudities* in the Chetham Library, Manchester.

¹ *Crudities*, p. 9.

² *Idem*, p. 15.

fact he sets down simply and faithfully, omitting nothing which had struck his inquisitive observation.

In this solitary fashion, partly using "shanks his mare," as honest Jack Brimblecombe hath it, and in part availing himself of the carts of the peasantry, he reached Paris at six o'clock on May 27th. Here he stayed several days carefully examining every object of interest within his compass. He was not favourably impressed with the cleanliness of the French capital, upon which he mischievously remarks, "But the name *Lutetia* it doth well brook, *Conveniunt rebus nomina saepe suis*, being so-called from the Latin word *lutum*, which signifieth dirt, because many of the streets are the dirtiest, and so consequently the most stinking of all that ever I saw in any city in my life."¹ That Paris has changed for the better in this important respect since the old-world traveller saw and condemned its accumulation of filth will be readily admitted, and cities nearer home would do well to take pattern by its supreme neatness. But Coryate did not confine himself to wading through the mud and stopping his nose to exclude needless aroma. On the day after his arrival he was occupied fully in seeing and admiring the glories of the Louvre.² On another occasion he witnessed with all the righteous horror of a good Protestant the ceremonies of the service at the Notre Dame, of which he has left a close and accurate account.³ In Paris, too, he had the distinguished honour, as he himself felt it, of the acquaintance and hospitality of Isaac Casaubon, with whose genial affability and extensive learning he was highly delighted.⁴ Lastly he visited Fontainebleau, where he admired the great forest, the noble palace, and noticed especially the great quantity of large carp in the pools of the park.⁵ His observations on Paris and its surroundings have every appearance of being as accurate as they are entertaining, and he blends descriptions of buildings, public functions, history, and legend with entertaining pieces of personal experience in a manner most piquant and refreshing to the reader.

From Paris he set out towards Lyons, halting by the way at Nevers, where he saw a goodly crowd of sturdy rogues, such as would have put him in fear of his life

¹ *Crudities*, p. 21. ² *Idem*, pp. 24-26. ³ *Idem*, pp. 27-30.

⁴ *Idem*, pp. 31-33. ⁵ *Idem*, pp. 37-47.

had he met them in his more solitary journeys. "I never saw so many roguish Egyptians," he writes, "gathered together in any one place in all my life as in Nevers, where there were a great multitude of men, women, and children of them, that disguise their faces as our counterfeit Western Egyptians in England. For both their hair and their faces looked so black as if they were raked out of hell, and sent into the world by great Beelzebub to terrify and astonish mortal men; their men are very ruffians and swashbucklers, having exceedingly long black hair curled, and swords or other weapons by their sides. Their women also suffer their hair to hang loosely about their shoulders, whereof I saw some dancing in the streets, and singing lascivious vain songs, whereby they drew many flocks of the foolish citisens about them."¹ That our traveller had a genuine hatred not unmixed with fear of these unlucky gypsies cannot be doubted; but strong as his language is, it must be admitted that his picture of their appearance and habits is in the main correct. Travellers had some reason to shrink from the tender mercies of these wanderers, one of whose fundamental principles in life was robbery, and who had no sensitive objection to murder if it were compatible with their convenience. To Coryate they were not merely thieves and murderers, but unholy infidels, who had direct dealings with the devil, and who were to be avoided as his favourite children. His alarm, then, when he saw so many in one and the same place was both genuine and reasonable; but in spite of his terrors he contrived to reach Lyons in safety by the third of June, "though dropping wet to his very skin." Of this city he gives a very full description, with a brief history of the events which had happened within or near its walls. The two days which he spent there were filled to overflowing with sight-seeing, and nothing of interest either escaped his keen eyes or his descriptive pen.²

From Lyons he passed through Savoy on his way to Piedmont, his journey occupying no more than five days. He crossed the Alps by the pass over Mont Cenis, and arrived, after walking through more than one lonely valley and staying at more than one solitary inn, at St. Georges Piedmont on the twelfth of June. Coryate does not appear to have possessed an especially keen perception

¹ *Crudities*, pp. 52, 53.

² *Idem*, pp. 55-67.

of the beauties of scenery, and he spends far more of his time in the description of the men whose works he saw and amongst whom he was sojourning for the time being than in giving the first impression which the sight of the Alps produced upon his mind. Every town in which he stayed is honoured with a special description, which he entitles his *Observations*, and he notes with scrupulous care such of the strange customs as struck his fancy. Nay, he even paid attention to the details of dress if they displayed any striking peculiarity. "In many places in Piedmont," he says, "I observed most delicate straw-hats, which both men and women use in most places of that province, but especially the women. For those that the women wear are very pretty, some of them having at least an hundred seams made with silk, and some prettily woven in the seams with silver, and many flowers, borders, and branches very curiously wrought in them, insomuch that some of them were valued at two ducatoons, that is eleven shillings."¹ The old bachelor, who had an observant eye for a pretty face as well as for a pretty hat, would form a quaint and almost emblematic picture of curiosity as he wended his leisurely way, staring with all his might at the straw-hats, and peeping beneath them at the fair faces of many maidens. As he journeyed through Piedmont, Coryate indulged more freely than was good for the digestion of a pedestrian in the sweet wines of the country. A painful though ludicrous consequence ensued. When he arrived at Turin, as he naïvely writes, he was unable to see much, because his face and hands were so inflamed that he was ashamed to go into the street.² But on returning to his usual drink of water, the inflammation left him in a little while, and he was able to make minute observations of Milan,³ where the exquisite beauty of the glorious cathedral inspired his style of writing with an unwonted eloquence.

But he had not allowed himself time, or what was more important, sufficient money, to linger in the various towns at which he halted for as long a space as he would have desired; yet the amount which he saw in the few months at his disposal fills his reader, who may have travelled in his footsteps, with no inconsiderable degree of wonder. On his way to Cremona he saw an invention, or importation, which was quite new to him. After com-

¹ *Crudities*, pp. 81, 82.

² *Idem*, p. 83.

³ *Idem*, pp. 94-109.

menting in somewhat disparaging terms upon the fans which both sexes were in the habit of carrying with them upon all their journeys, he continues, "Also many of them do carry other fine things of a far greater price, that will cost at least a ducat, which they commonly call in the Italian tongues *umbrellas*; that is, things that minister shadow unto them for shelter against the scorching heat of the sun. These are made of leather, something answerable to the form of a little canopy, and hooped in the inside with divers little wooden hoops, that extend the *umbrella* in a pretty large compass. They are used especially by horsemen, who carry them in their hands when they ride, fastening the end of the handle upon one of their thighs, and they impart so large a shadow unto them, that it keepeth the heat of the sun from the upper parts of their bodies."¹ Coryate might well stare when he saw one of these mighty ancestors of a numerous offspring, borne by Italian cavaliers to shelter them from the sun; and doubtless he would pass on his way congratulating himself upon the fact that his own broad-brimmed hat performed the same useful office for his exposed head. The first time at which such an *umbrella* dawned upon his sight, he must have turned back often to look at the retreating *canopy* with something like wondering contempt at the effeminacy of the Italian horseman who used its leather shade. But he was destined to witness stranger sights before death cut short his travels.

He stayed a day at Cremona, which he spent according to his custom in burrowing his way into every curiosity of the place. Whereupon he proceeded to Mantua, which he reached on the eighteenth of June, and he entered Vergil's birthplace with almost a pilgrim's reverent eagerness. The solemn quiet of the ancient city affected him with so great an admiration that he wrote, "This is the city which, of all other places in the world, I would wish to make my habitation in, and spend the remainder of my days in some divine meditations among the sacred Muses, were it not for their gross idolatry and superstitious ceremonies, which I detest, and the love of Odcombe, in Somersetshire, which is so dear unto me that I prefer the very smoke thereof before the fire of all other places under the sun."² Coryate's reverence for the birthplace

¹ *Crudities*, pp. 111, 112.

² *Idem*, p. 122.

of his favourite poet need excite no surprise, and the tranquillity of Mantua could not fail to be inexpressibly soothing to the travel-worn wayfarer. But his earnest Protestantism broke out into fierce revolt at the ceremonies which he saw around him when the mass was celebrated, and at the excessive power of the priests. Moreover, with a touching sincerity, he expresses his longing for home. The green hills and fertile vales and nestling churches of his native county were ever fresh in the mind of the traveller amid the gorgeous sights which he had come to see. Nay, more than once during his lonely wanderings amongst unfamiliar scenes and strange faces, the thought of the warm, cosy fireside in the old rectory at home, where his mother moved about her house with noiseless footfalls, lest she should disturb the sturdy rector at the composition of his sermons or his pompous Latin poems. Traces of this longing for home are to be found in all of the narratives of his journeys, which show that Coryate was a patriot first and a traveller second.

But such thoughts, though they may have sent a momentary thrill of sadness through the wanderer's warm heart, did not visit him often, nor for long; and he pressed on to Padua, where he stayed three days, revelling in the beauty of the buildings and the antique air of that ancient city.¹ From Padua he moved forward to Venice, the end of his journey, a town which he admired greatly, and where he stayed about a month. He has left a complete record of what he saw,² and he has gathered together many curious facts, which are to be found nowhere else. Amongst other impressive circumstances he noted with grave reprobation the immense number of courtesans, about twelve thousand, which infested and infected the city, and he wondered that the judgment of Sodom did not overtake a place where so gross a trade was publicly permitted. His strongly-expressed disgust did not prevent him from kissing one of the fairest of these, whose portrait, with his own, adorns this portion of his narrative. The beauty of the buildings—rising right out of the water, as it seemed—the manifest power of the Republic, the grandeur of the palaces and churches, and the graceful movement of the gondolas, filled him with an honest admiration, which he has truthfully expressed in those simple terms in which the descriptions of what he actually

¹ *Crudities*, pp. 125-127.

² *Idem*, pp. 157-291.

saw are always couched. Regretfully he left the city of one hundred islands on the eighth of August, and sailed back to Padua. Here he was royally entertained by Lord Wentworth, at his own table, and in every way most kindly treated, in whose company he witnessed "an exorcism performed by a priest for the expelling of the devil out of a man possessed."¹ Sir Henry Wotton, who was at that time the English ambassador at Venice, does not seem to have welcomed his eccentric countryman with any degree of warmth; but Coryate found sufficient compensation in the considerate kindness of Lord Wentworth.

Reluctantly taking leave of his hospitable entertainer, he pursued his way to Verona, of the amphitheatre of which he has given an engraving, and passing through Brescia and Bergamo he crossed the Alps by the Splugen Pass. He saw and greatly admired the beautiful lake of Como on his journey, of which he has left a fuller description than of most of the picturesque scenes through which he travelled.² Descending through long and lonely valleys, which filled his soul with unspeakable awe, he journeyed by Wallenstadt to Zurich. Once he stayed at an inn so lonely that he was almost the solitary guest, and on most occasions he was unable to speak to the natives from his ignorance of their language. At Candolchin he for once had pleasant company at the hostelry. "A certain priest," he says, "of this country cheered me with very comfortable words at mine inn at Candolchin, because he saw I was a solitary man and a stranger. For he told me that, because the fare of some places of the country was hard and the ways bad, he would endeavour with cheerful terms to rouse up my spirits, and to be as merry as a solitary man could, because I travelled in as honest a country as in all Christendom. For had I a thousand crowns about me, I might more securely travel with it in their country without company or weapon, than in any other land whatsoever, affirming that he never heard in all his life of any man robbed in that country."³ With such cheerful converse, when he could get it, did the lonely traveller gladden his solitude, and he found by experience that the kindly priest had spoken nothing but the truth. How much he must have rejoiced in such con-

¹ *Crudities*, p. 291.

² *Idem*, pp. 308-333, 341-354, and 371.

³ *Idem*, p. 360.

genial company, after his long and solitary walks through mountain-valleys with huge summits towering on either hand whitened with snow above the ancient pine-forests, those only, who have taken such journeys alone, can fully appreciate. Tom was by nature a man who loved society, and though he was profoundly impressed by its absence in the solitudes of Switzerland, the brevity of his notes during this portion of his journey serves to show how much more he enjoyed town life with its varying excitements.

When he had reached Venice, and before he started upon his return journey, he had traversed 1,714 miles on foot, on horseback, in a litter, and by boat. But his legs had served him most in their primitive method of conveyance. A great distance still lay before the traveller, which would have to be passed before he arrived once more in England. It was therefore with great joy that he reached Zurich on the twenty-fifth of August. Here he was once more in a civilized part of the country, where he could have that learned society of which he was extremely fond, and in which he was not unqualified to shine when a fair opportunity was afforded to him.¹ Here, too, he could rejoice in that pure Protestantism in which he had been reared, and which was dear to his heart. Always something of a Puritan, there can be no question that, after the gorgeous ritual of Romanism, which he had witnessed rather as a spectator than as a worshipper, he would rejoice in the simple devotion of Swiss Protestantism. Its strong Calvinism would evoke sympathy in his soul, and such of the sermons as he could understand would appeal to his own sincere convictions. Over and over again in his travels in Italy he inveighed in his notes against what he called in plain terms the "godless idolatry" which he saw around him. He hated the Papistical ceremonies like poison; and his heart went out to the fervid zeal of his Calvinistic friends in Zurich. Amongst these were many learned men, with whom he was able to hold correspondence both personal and in long Latin letters. Such men as Caspar Waser, the eminent Orientalist, and Henry Bullinger, the brilliant pupil of Zwingli, were numbered in the ranks of his friends, with whom he conversed and corresponded; nor can it be said that the Latinity of his letters was inferior to theirs.²

¹ *Crudities*, pp. 374-393.

² *Idem*, pp. 374-393.

But he was only able to linger in this congenial society for the space of two days. Passing through Baden, in Aargau, and through Rheinfeldt, he reached Basle on the thirtieth of August. Here he spent only one day, and, taking boat down the Rhine, he pursued the course now familiar to a thousand travellers, but then scarcely known by the majority of his countrymen, to Strassburg, which he reached on the first of September. His description of this city is full of a somewhat whimsical insight and a profoundly subtle observation. It is illustrated by a fine plate of the curious clock of the cathedral spire, which excited Coryate's wondering admiration from its surpassing ingenuity.¹ From Strassburg he proceeded to Baden and Heidelberg, where he saw the *Great Tun*, of which he has given a curious engraving. As a second curiosity, he appears to have seen Frederick IV., the ill-fated Elector Palatine, whose portrait he gives. From the thin, yellow paper the grim-looking, sorrowful face of James's unfortunate son-in-law peers forth, and no one observing his features would be prone to think of him as anything but a political weakling. He is armed in steel; but irresolution seems to sit upon his lips, while obstinacy, that common failing of irresolute men, peeps forth from his sad eyes. Such a man was ill-fitted to be the Protestant champion of Germany, and he was a complete and conspicuous failure, as might have been expected by any far-sighted politician.² That Coryate honoured him for his sturdy though narrow Protestantism is very certain, but that he deserved this or any other honour may well be doubted, as his followers and his allies found to their cost.

From Heidelberg our traveller wandered by Worms to Speyer and Franckenthal. Near the latter of these two places he happened to pass through a vineyard. Wholly ignorant of the German law, which made it a penal offence to take a bunch of grapes without having first asked permission, he went into the bowers of the vineyard and bore off a rich bunch to eat along the road to allay his drought. Immediately a tall boor, armed with a mighty halberd, came rushing upon honest Tom, whom he deluged with a flood of fierce German. Tom, for his part, did not understand the man's speech, but when his hat was appropriated as a pawn he understood that he had commit-

¹ *Crudities*, pp. 446-461.

² *Idem*, pp. 474-500.

ted some grave offence. Recovering his spirits, he began to speak the peasant well, and to make himself understood he used first the Latin and then the Greek tongue. But he had forgotten that Greek grapes were not to be gathered from German thorns, nor Latin figs from High-Dutch thistles; and the more he spoke in the ancient classical languages the more did the peasant storm, evidently thinking that Tom was mocking him. So the two argued, the clown in his vigorous vernacular and the traveller in Latin and Greek, without coming any nearer to an agreement, and without securing the transference of the appropriated hat. At length a small company of three or four travellers passed that way, and perceiving that a dispute was raging, after the fashion of human kind they began to take sides. At last one of the wayfarers, who happened by great good fortune to understand Latin, was able to penetrate into the cause of the argument. Good-naturedly he made Tom's peace, who ultimately recovered his cherished hat on the payment of a small fine. Upon this troublesome passage Coryate moralizes after his fashion, and bids succeeding travellers beware how they help themselves to grapes in so rigid a land as Germany.¹

For the most part the traveller had been free from disagreeable episodes of this nature, only one of which he records as suffered on his way to Baden, wherein, however, he came off with nothing more than an unnecessary fright. As he was wending his solitary way, he caught sight of two ragged and disreputable-looking men, fully armed, approaching him, which put him into a great terror of his life. Poor as he was, with his worn shoes and faded clothes, he had still money enough in his girdle to make him worth robbing. So he cast about in his mind to find some means of escape from the clutches of his fancied enemies. A happy thought soon struck him, and with much outward assurance and inward trepidation, as the men drew near, he stood with his head bent and his hat stretched out, begging like a mendicant friar. Whereupon he received money to the value of fourpence half-penny, which paid the cost of "half his supper"² that night. Tom's cunning stood him in good stead for once; and as he saw the two men retreating from him, he must have hugged himself with intense satisfaction at the thought of his successful contrivance. With such vary-

¹ *Crudities*, pp. 524, 525.

² *Idem*, p. 465.

ing experiences he passed through Mainz, Cologne, where he was lost in wonder at the majesty of the then unfinished cathedral, Wesel, Nimeguen, Middleburg and Flushing, which he reached on September 27. Here he took ship on the first of October, and arrived in London on the third. He concludes his delightful narrative of his travels thus: "Total of my journey forth and back 1,977 miles. The cities that I saw in the space of these five months are five and forty; whereof in France, five; in Savoy, one; in some parts of High Germany, fifteen; in the Netherlands, seven."¹

It has only been possible to give the most cursory survey of this extensive journey, so much of which was taken on foot; but enough has been said to put to shame the commonplace traveller of the present day, who goes everywhere and sees what he is told to see, but remembers little or nothing of what he has seen. Coryate was a shrewd and accurate observer, a fact which proves that he could not by any means have been the fool which his contemporaries represented him to be. He had used only one pair of shoes during all this journey, and they were only once repaired, so excellent was the leather of those happy days. These, with some of his clothes, he hung up as a kind of votive offering upon his return in Odcombe Church, where they were to be seen as late as the year 1702.² This piece of eccentricity serves to show Coryate's curious character, which blended prudence with folly in such a manner as to deceive so acute an observer of men and manners as Thomas Fuller. The Church historian has left a lifelike portrait of the man himself, whose genuine learning he warmly commends to those who accused him of folly. "The shape of his head," he remarks, "had no promising form, being like a sugar-loaf inverted, with the little end before, as composed of fancy and memory without any common sense."³ From this picture one sees that Fuller was a phrenologist of a kind; but that the man, who had escaped from the possible assault of two ruffianly-looking men by so simple yet astute a stratagem as the one just narrated, was destitute of common sense, cannot be true on the face of it. There was more in that sugar-loaf head than its possessor was always credited with possessing, and many of those who

¹ *Crudities*, p. last.

² Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol. II., col. 214.

³ Fuller, *Worthies* (1662), "Somersetshire," p. 31.

judged him severely stand convicted of some error in their judgment. Fuller proceeds to commend Tom for his contempt of worldly possessions and for his contentment with what was just enough for him. He further concludes: "Prince Henry allowed him a pension and kept him for his servant. Sweetmeats and Coryate made up the last course at all Court entertainments. Indeed he was the courtiers' anvil to try their wits upon, and sometimes this anvil returned the hammers as hard knocks as it received, his bluntness repaying their abuseness."¹

That Coryate would be welcome back to Court again cannot be questioned, and his pension would not have been forfeited by his five months' absence. But its accumulated arrears would be paid with that promiscuous regularity which marked the Court of the modern Solomon. As soon as he was retired to Odcombe Tom busied himself in setting down an exact narrative of his travels, which must have occupied him for some considerable time, and when his grateful task was accomplished he returned to Court to use every possible influence to get his book published. For more than a year he was not taken seriously, and he wandered disconsolately from one distinguished patron to another begging for his aid with the booksellers. He petitioned Prince Henry, and so great was his pertinacity that at length he obtained something over sixty pages of mock testimonials from all of the leading wits of his day. Ben Jonson edited this amusing collection of nonsense verses, concluding his preface with a quaint acrostic on the author's name. Extracts from two of these so-called panegyrics have already been quoted; others were penned by Sir Dudley Digges, Rowland Cotton, and Robert Yaxley, whose effusion thus concludes:

"There's few of them that now go forth
Return home half so well;
Then buy his book, ye Britons bold,
But read it at your leisure;
For it and he, and he and it
Were born to shew you pleasure."

Coryate's immortal shoes attracted the notice of Henry Peacham, who sent the traveller a neat drawing of them wreathed with laurel and poems in Latin and English.

¹ *Idem*, "Somersetshire," p. 31.

John Strangeways too celebrates them in a limping couplet :

“With one poor pair of shoes, saving alone-a
He only once did sole them at Verona.”

Amongst Tom's other panegyrists were Hugh Holland, who wrote in Italian, English, Latin and Welsh, and, who notes the fact, that the wanderer came from Venice with only *one shirt*, a statement which has its bearing upon the story of the trunk as given above. But it scarcely seems to support the view that Tom used the trunk as a place of concealment, while his solitary shirt was being washed, though the singleness of his shirt may have combined with the previous incident in his Court life to make a sportive tale which contained both cause and effect. Inigo Jones, John Hoskins, and Michael Drayton gave each his sportive contribution, and even so grave a personage as Lionel Granfield did not disdain to thus occupy his pen in a poem in which he says in anticipation of *Hudibras* :

“He Greek and Latin speaks with greater ease
Than hogs eat acorns, or tame pigeons pease.”

Dr. Donne did not refuse his laboured tribute, which, it must be confessed, concludes with a touch of unkindness :

“Therefore mine impotency I confess ;
The healths, which my brain bears, must be far less :
Thy giant wit o'erthrows me, I am gone ;
And rather than read all, I would read none.”

John Owen supplies a neat Latin epigram to the medley :

“Tot liber hic laudes, quot habet vulpecula laudes ;
Vix humeris tantum sustinet Atlas onus.”

And Thomas Bastard sings with more vigour than politeness :

“Whilst snow on lofty Alps shall freeze,
And paint the dales rich butterflies,
Thy name shall live, nor be forgotten,
When Seville oranges be rotten,
And thou shalt wear our English bays,
And surfeit, yet not die of praise.”¹

¹ These quotations must be sought in the unpagged introduction to the *Crudities*.

With such scant courtesy did the leading wits of the age treat one of the greatest travellers of that day or of any succeeding time. But honest Tom cared little for their jibes; it was their names which he wanted, and having got these, he was able to go with confidence to the booksellers. Whether he was a fool or not he knew that the commendations would sell his book and would moreover excite an interest in its purchase entirely apart from the rest of the contents. Doubtless he hoped that those who bought the work for its prefatory epigrams would read the rest of its pages for the sake of the matter contained in them. Nor was he disappointed: in 1611, by a curious coincidence the year of the completion of the Authorised Version of the Bible, the sturdy volume of his *Crudities* was issued to the world. Its full value, as will appear, was something more explicit than the single word by which it is known to-day where it is known. The first title-page contains an emblematical frontispiece, engraved by William Hole, who was also the engraver of the rest of the plates which accompany the volume. In the top central space is the following inscription: "Coryat's Crudities, Hastily gobbled up in five Moneths' travells in France, Savoy, Italy, Rhetia, commonly called the Grisons country, Helvetia *alias* Switzerland, some parts of High Germany, and the Netherlands; Newly digested in the hungry air of Odcombe, in the county of Somerset, and now dispersed to the nourishment of the travelling Members of this Kingdome. *Quadrigris pedibus bene vivere navibus atque.*" Immediately under this title stands the portrait of the author, supported by three female figures to represent Gaul, Germany, and Italy, which does not seem to have quite answered to Fuller's description on this head. On the left, at the top of the series of pictures, are a Spanish and Italian mare to express the courtesans of those countries. Beneath follow, in order, a striking representation of Coryate feeding the fishes; the author carried on a litter over the Alps; and, lastly, the same august personage riding in a Picardy cart. On the right of the title and portrait are found Coryate begging from the two ruffians; an old hat, torn hose, shoes full of gravel, and a louse-dropping case as the tokens of his journeying; Coryate beaten by a boor for stealing grapes; Coryate pelted with eggs by a punk whom he had disappointed; and Coryate rowing for the stews.

To this carefully engraved title-page is added another, which is, however, entirely without illustration of any kind, and which gives a brief summary of the principal contents of the book thus : "Three Crude Veines are Presented in This Booke following (beside the foresaid Crudities) no less flowing in the body of the Booke, then the Crudities themselves, two of Rhetoricke and one of Poesie. That is to say, a most elegant Oration, first written in the Latine tongue by Hermannus Kirchnerus, a Civil Lawyer, Orator, Caesarean poet, and professor of Eloquence and Antiquities in the famous Universitie of Marpurg in the Landgraviat of Hassia, in praise of Travell in generall. Now distilled into English Spirit through the Odcombian Limbecke. This precedeth the Crudities. Another also composed by the Author of the former, in praise of Travell in Germanie in particular, sublimed and brought over the Helme in the Stillatorie of the said Travelling Thomas. This about the Centre or Navell of the Crudities. Then in the Posterne of them looke, and thou shalt find the Posthume Poems of the Author's Father, coming as neere Kinsmen to the Worke, being next of blood to the booke, and younger brothers to the Author himself. London. Printed by W. S. Anno Domini, 1611." Thus Coryate, for he must surely have been the author of this extravagant title, frightens possible readers by his wayward humour of hiding the contents of a singularly able and readable book under such a huge designation. But the book itself, in spite of, or perhaps because of, its title, had an almost instantaneous popularity, and, large as it was, it sold so rapidly that the author brought out what he called "*Coryat's Crambe*, or his Colwort twice sodden, and now served in with other Macaronicke Dishes, as the Second Course to his Crudities." This second instalment, like the first, was published by William Stansby in 1611, and is a quarto of extreme rarity. It contains poems by Ben Jonson, Laurence Whitaker, and by others of the author's witty friends, with some additional matter concerning his travels. In the same year the same publisher issued *The Odcombian Banquet*, which was made up of the various panegyrics, serious or otherwise, upon Coryate's two books. By this means Tom's perseverance was rewarded, and he was able to get together sufficient money for his next course of wandering through Turkey and much of Asia.

Thus furnished for his needs by the productions of his brain, at the end of September, or the beginning of October, 1612, Coryate made a great farewell oration at the cross in Odcombe to his fellow townsmen,¹ and on the twelfth of October in the same year, two years before which it seems probable that his father died, he set sail for Constantinople. Here, at his first landing, he stayed but for a short time, as it was his intention to return² after he had visited certain other places. On the twelfth of January, 1613, he reached Zante, where he saw the neglected ruins of the tomb of Cicero and Terentia, his wife, in a miserably uncared for condition; whereupon he lamented, "I could not but condole the misfortune of that famous and incomparable orator, of whose incomparable learning so many excellent orators have drawn liquor of rhetorical invention, to the great garnishing and adorning of their polite lucubrations." This is an example of Coryate's style at its worst, showing his love of harmless extravagance of statement, which is at least as injurious to its author and its theme as it is diverting to the reader. From Zante he sailed to Scio, with the vain project of seeing one of the seven traditional tombs of Homer. But time and tide could not wait for the curious traveller; the mythical tomb was situated ten miles inland, and the road thither was rocky and dangerous: thus he was compelled to return without obtaining the object of his desire.³ That he was bitterly disappointed is certain; but the captains of small coasting ships are not of a nature to appreciate the delight of losing a favourable wind in order to enable a passenger, who would not pay much for his passage, to look at a mere mound of earth.

From Scio he took an English ship, and was landed on the Trojan shore on the twenty-second of February, 1613, where he carefully examined the plain of Troy, and the great ruins scattered thereon amongst green patches of young corn. He endeavoured, as was his habit, and as far as possible, to ferret out the truth of all that he saw; and catching sight of several large and stately tombs, he complained, "It grieved me to the heart that I could not learn, either by inscriptions or any other means, whose

¹ Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol II., col. 209.

² Purchas, *Pilgrims* (1625), Vol II., p. 1,811.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 1,812.

monuments these were ; for it is vain to be induced by conjectures to say they were these or these men's." He does, however, hazard a conjecture with regard to two of them, one of which he supposed to be the grave of Ilus, and the other that of Priam.¹ While, with the zeal of a true antiquarian, he was busily examining the ruins with his English companions and their armed attendants, as he says, "Master Robert Rugge, observing that I had taken pains for some few hours in searching out the most notable antiquities of this the worthiest part of Troy (that is, the ruins of a great palace), to yield me some kind of *guerdon* or *remuneration*² for my pains, in a merry humour drew his sword out of his scabbard, and ascending to one of those great stones that lie in the open part of this middle gate, knighted me, that kneeled upon another stone upon my right knee, by name of the first English Knight of Troy, and at the knighting of me pronounced these witty verses *ex tempore* :

"Coryate no more, but now a Knight of Troy,
 Odcombe no more, but henceforth England's joy.
 Brave Brute of our brave English wits commended,
 True Trojan from Æneas' race descended.
 Rise, top of wit, the honour of our nation,
 And to old Ilium make a new oration."

Two poor Turks, that stood but a little way from us, when he drew his naked sword, thought verily he meant to have cut off my head for some notorious villainy that I had perpetrated. Those verses I answered *ex tempore* ; also our musketeers discharged two volleys of shot for joy of my knighthood.

"Lo, here with prostrate knee I do embrace
 The gallant title of a Trojan Knight,
 In Priam's Court, which time shall ne'er deface :
 A grace unknown to any British wight.
 This noble knighthood shall fame's trumps resound,
 To Odcombe's honour maugré envy fell.
 O'er famous Albion throughout that island round,
 Till that my mournful friends shall ring my knell."³

Having thus delivered himself in very tolerable verse, the traveller proceeded to pronounce a majestic oration, in which humour, extravagance, and learning were equally blended, to the intense delight of his friends, whose

¹ Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol II., pp. 1,813-1,814.

² Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, III. i. 171 *seqq.*

³ Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol II., pp. 1,816-1,817.

laughter rang through the silence of desolation. That Coryate was able to enter so fully into the jest, with a full consciousness that it was a jest, goes far to prove that he was not quite so much of an unconscious humorist, as his English tormentors are in the habit of asserting.

After this merry escapade Coryate returned to Constantinople, where he remained for about a year, during the whole of which he took great pains to observe the manners of the city. He was hospitably and kindly treated during most of this time by Sir Paul Pinder, the then British Ambassador at the Court of the Sultan. Amongst other noteworthy matters Tom saw the Dancing Dervishes, whose protracted gyrations he greatly admired. He witnessed a flight of locusts, which he graphically describes: "Grasshoppers (as he calls them) do fall so thick in Constantinople, and the territories about the city, in the summer time, and that especially in June or July, being brought in with an eastern wind, that a man cannot pass in the streets of Constantinople or Galata, but he shall everywhere tread upon them. Also they fly so thick upon the tops of the houses, that they do even cover the tiles; and in meadows, pastures, and upon hills lie in such multitudes, that they seem to cover the grass, and in the highways horses that go, tread upon them and kill them in their journey; likewise upon trees of all sorts, vines, corn, etc., they fall in such abundance, that sometimes they annoy and spoil great store of fruit; besides they are much greater than ours are in the west parts of Europe."¹ Coryate's curiosity took him to witness a circumcision upon one occasion, of which he has left a minute description.² At another time he went to the synagogue,³ where the priest "bellowed like an ox with a very hideous and roaring exaltation of his voice." Here, too, "the rosewater that was spirted by little young Jews out of silver vessels upon all those that carried about the *Law*, was so much, that the Christian spectators thought that they would have half drowned them with rosewater." He further remarks that, "It is the custom that whensoever any fire ariseth in the city, to hang up him in whose house it beginneth; as now, a cook, in whose house it begun, was hanged up presently after the fire ceased."⁴

¹ Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol II., pp. 1,821-1,822.

² *Idem ibidem*, pp. 1,824-1,825.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 1,826.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, p. 1,822.

Nothing was too insignificant for honest Tom's curious attention; he found that dogs were banished from Constantinople, for fear of their carrying the infection of the plague in their hair.¹ He tasted and did not approve of Turkish cheese, "which is very lean and dry, but fiery salt." He was an interested, if a somewhat disgusted, spectator of the native art of butter-making, the process and the results of which were alike extremely distasteful to his English palate. "They set cream over the fire," he says, "and so the gross substance descendeth to the bottom, and the butter swimmeth to the top, which they skim with a ladle, and after pour it into the hide of a buffalo or an ox. This being cold looketh rather like grease than butter. They bring it to Constantinople in buffalo hides, which, when they transport it from Galata to Constantinople, they throw it down into the water and drag it at a boat's tail through the sea, and before they put it out at the shore at Constantinople they drag it also through a great deal of mud. One of these hides is so great, that when it is carried into the city, eight men do usually carry it upon their backs by the help of levers and ropes."² These butter-skins were opened by a slit in the belly. It must be confessed that such a method of preparation does not seem likely to have improved the originally greasy flavour of the butter so-called. Indeed the flavour must have combined the oily taste of dripping with the muddy sensation of beetroot. That Coryate had once tasted this butter is evident from an exceedingly descriptive but coarse adjective which he applies to it; that he would taste it a second time, after he had seen its preparation, would seem doubtful.

He found the Turks a nation distinguished by a singularly graceful if somewhat grave courtesy, which had a different method of displaying itself than that which was prevalent in Christian Europe. "The Turk," he remarks, "doth never at the saluting of his friend at any time of the day, or when he drinketh to him at dinner or supper, put off his turban (as we Christians do our hats one to another), but boweth his head and putteth his right hand upon his breast so that he utterly disliketh the fashion that is used amongst us of putting off our hats; therefore, when he wisheth any ill to his enemy, he prayeth God *to send him no more rest than a Christian's*

¹ Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol II., p. 1,825. ² *Idem ibidem*, p. 1,828.

hat.”¹ That the Turk had some sense in his objection to the continual uncovering of his shaven crown, is comparatively evident to those who suffer much from the still prevalent custom of removing the hat. Moreover he would not find his turban a very manageable piece of headgear to use in the western manner of salutation. With such careful notes of minute observation is Coryate’s journal at Constantinople bountifully seasoned, and all who care to know the habits of the men of other nations and of a former century must unfeignedly regret that the observant traveller did not live long enough to give to the world a second book of the calibre of his *Crudities*. Furthermore, unless Samuel Purchas has exercised the pruning-knife with unsparing rigour, as does not appear probable, honest Tom’s style of writing improved every year, when he was attempting to describe what he saw, and not playing the fool to please the easily amused fancy of his friends.

On February 23, 1614, he left Constantinople and travelling by way of Lesbos, “where the women were the ugliest sluts that ever he saw, saving the Armenian trulls,” and by way of Scio, arrived at Iskandrun.² Here he stayed to catch breath, and next set out for Aleppo, where he remained two days to recruit his strength in preparation for a longer and a harder journey. On the fifteenth of March he travelled southward with Henry Allard, of Kent, to visit Jerusalem, which they reached on the twelfth of April. Passing through Damascus on his way, he had leisure to admire the wonderful fertility of the place, and he noticed the great abundance of roses of many kinds. The route which the travellers pursued was by the Jordan, under Mount Tabor, near the Well of Samaria, and past the scattered ruins and waving palms of Jericho.³ In Jerusalem the wanderers spent much time, and they were awestruck by the hallowed associations of the Holy City. On the twenty-eighth of the same month they went to see the Jordan a little way before it enters the Dead Sea, which they do not appear to have visited. Here Coryate picked up bits of asbestos, which he at once connected with the destruction of the Cities of the Plain. Arrived at the bank of the Jordan, all the pilgrims stripped and bathed in the sacred river, and Tom

¹ Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol. II., p. 1,824.

² *Idem ibidem*, p. 1,829.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 1,831.

himself, with his wonted fortune, found himself "up to the middle in mud near the banks." Here he heard of, but did not see, "the pillar of Lot's wife in salt with her child in her arms, and a pretty dog also in salt by her, about a bow-shot from the Dead Sea.¹ Returning to Jerusalem, he went into the Temple for the third time on April 22, where he found, as in older times, buyers and sellers of "girdles, garters, bread," etc.² Having reverently visited the Holy Sepulchre and grieved that it was still in possession of the infidels, he returned to Aleppo to wait for the setting out of the next caravan for Persia.³

¹ Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol. II., p. 1,831.

² *Idem ibidem*, p. 1,831.

³ The authorities, following Terry (*A Voyage to East India*, pp. 58, 59), unanimously and erroneously assert that Coryate went from Jerusalem into Egypt and Grand Cairo. His own letters, preserved by Purchas (*Pilgrims*, Vol. I., pp. 592-597; cf. Taylor, the Water Poet, *Works*, 1630, folios 83-87, where Coryate's letter to his mother is given in full), afford no evidence for this extension of his tour. Writing to his friend, Laurence Whitaker, he says: "About a month after (that is, after his last letter), I returned to Aleppo from Jerusalem" (Purchas, Vol. I., p. 592). Moreover, in the letter to his mother from the Court of the Great Mogul in Ajmir, he says in express terms: "But what the countries are that *I mean to see betwixt this and Christendom*, and how long I will spend in each country, I am unwilling to advertise you of at this present, desiring rather to signify that unto you *after I have performed my design than before*: howbeit, in a few words, I will tell you of certain cities of great renown in former times that I resolve (by God's help), to see in Asia, where I now am, namely, ancient *Babylon* and *Nimrod's Tower*, some few miles from *Nineveh*, and in the same the sepulchre of the *Prophet Jonas*, spacious and goodly; *Cairo in Egypt*, heretofore *Memphis* upon the famous river *Nilus*" (Taylor, as above, p. 86). That Coryate could have written in this strain of his intentions, if he had actually visited the places mentioned in a previous journey, of which no record has survived, is all but impossible. Nay, when he himself described fully his journeys from Aleppo to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Aleppo, it is inconceivable that he should have left out so important a visit as one to Egypt had he actually paid it. It is therefore surprising that his friend and chamber-fellow at Ajmir, Edward Terry, should have confounded his intention with its fulfilment. It is even more surprising that Antony Wood, with the printed copy of the foregoing letter before him, as is manifest from his account of Coryate, should have so misread its pages. Dr. Augustus Jessopp, with his customary disregard of accuracy, misled by Wood or by Terry, or by both, has perpetuated the error in his article on "Coryate" in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. The date of the letter to Tom's mother is October 31, 1616, while that of the letter to Laurence Whitaker is a year earlier (September 30, 1615). Coryate himself died at Surat in December, 1617. It must therefore be obvious to the attentive reader that he *did not actually go so far as Egypt, Nineveh and the rest*, on his journey to India, but that he *intended* to visit these places during his return. Terry, who trusted to his memory, might easily confound the will with the deed; we who have Coryate's own letters cannot make the same confusion.

At Aleppo Coryate was compelled, much against his will, to wait three months for the starting of the caravan with which he intended to travel. He was not idle, however, but filled up his time by making notes—which now, alas! have perished—of what he saw around him, and few men have had keener eyes than he. The caravan, when it did set out, was an unusually large one, consisting of six thousand souls, two thousand camels, fifteen hundred horses, one thousand mules and eight hundred asses. In this goodly and mingled company, the largest with which he had ever travelled, Coryate crossed the Euphrates somewhere near Bir, and entering Chaldea he took two days' journey to Ur of the Chaldees, "where Abraham was born, a very delicate and pleasant city." Here he stayed four days looking for the ruins of the patriarch's house; but as was to be expected, he found no traces of them.¹ Indeed that tent must have been made of extremely durable materials to have lasted down to the seventeenth century. He next crossed the Tigris somewhere near the modern Diarbekir, where he was easily able to wade the stream. At this point of his journey he was robbed by a Turkish Spahi, or horseman, of all his money, save a few pieces which he carried concealed in his clothes. From the Tigris the caravan proceeded to Ecbatana, now called Tabriz, where Coryate noted the desolate ruins of its former splendours, when it had been the summer residence of the ancient kings of Persia. The next considerable halting-place was Kasbin, and at length the traveller arrived at Ispahan, then the capital city of Persia; but to his chagrin the king was absent. He was, in fact, in the region of Gurgistan, "ransacking the poor Christians there with great hostility with fire and sword." Here he remained two months, during which time he acquired a competent acquaintance with the Persian tongue, a knowledge which much assisted his progress in his later journeys, in which he was wont to travel habited in the Persian dress. On his way between Ispahan and the Indian frontier Coryate met Sir Robert and Lady Sherley, who were proceeding to the Persian Court, and who delighted him by showing him his two books neatly kept. They promised to make an interest for him with the Persian monarch against his return,

¹ For the whole of this journey *vide* Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol. I., pp. 592-597.

and Lady Sherley gave him forty shillings in Persian money, a gift most acceptable and useful to him after his recent robbery.

Having arrived at Shirkapore, Coryate marched for some time along the right bank of the Indus, which he crossed near Mittunkot, and thence he made his way across country to Lahore, which was then "one of the largest cities of the whole universe; for it containeth at least sixteen miles in compass, and exceedeth Constantinople itself in greatness." Here he found the famous *Royal Road* to Agra, which he much admired from its smoothness and the stately lines of trees through which it passed for a distance of four hundred miles. Though he found much that was wonderful in Agra, he recognised that it was smaller and less beautiful than Lahore. Here, however, he stayed some little time to rest, and then set out for Ajmir, where the Court of the Great Mogul was held. He had now reached what proved to be the supreme limit of his journey, having occupied fifteen months and some odd days in coming from Jerusalem, and having walked at least two thousand seven hundred miles. At Ajmir he was warmly welcomed by the colony of English merchants, ten in number, who resided there, and who entertained him during his long stay free of all cost to himself. They had been long from home, and they would rejoice in the company of one who could bring them news, though indeed it was old news, of the little island in the western sea which was so dear to them. Besides, Tom was worth entertaining for his own sake. He had collected a great mass of curious information during his travels, which could not fail to be of interest and of possible use to merchants who were on the look out for new markets. Moreover he was a simple, kindly soul, when the crust of affectation was penetrated, who loved a harmless jest, and who could readily adapt himself to the company with whom he happened to be.

He had lived with rigid economy during his long peregrination, eating the simplest kind of food and drinking the cheapest of all fluids, when he could get it, namely, water. He has left an interesting account of his expenses, which will not a little surprise those who are wont to travel in a luxurious style of princely comfort. "I spent," he calculates, "in my ten months' travel betwixt Aleppo and the Mogul's Court, but £3 sterling, yet fared reason-

able well every day; victuals being so cheap in some countries where I travelled that I oftentimes lived completely for one penny sterling a day; yet of that three pound I was cozened of no less than ten shillings sterling by certain lewd Christians of the *Armenian nations*; so that indeed I spent but fifty shillings in my ten months' travels."¹ Coryate says nothing of his sleeping accommodation during this period; if he slept with the caravan, it would doubtless cost him nothing; and when he was cheated by the Armenians of whom he speaks, he would seem to have been lodging at an inn kept by these "lewd Christians." The fact that he travelled on foot during almost the whole of these ten months would also serve to keep down his expenses, and amongst the hospitable Orientals of that day he would be freely entertained on more than one occasion. As he was neither a merchant nor a political envoy, he would be taken for a devotee, who had undertaken a pilgrimage for some sacred purpose, and the Mohammedans were in most cases willing to help such an one upon his way. But however he contrived to go so far and to spend so little, one fact remains, that few of his successors, even if they travelled on foot, could perform so vast a journey with so much simplicity and economy. The very washing-bills of the wayfarers of a cleaner age would have absorbed Coryate's fifty shillings in less than three months, while the *bacsheesh* of the less kindly eastern guides of the present would have exhausted the whole of his reserve fund with as great a rapidity as the *Spahi* who had robbed him. But he was able to achieve his object in seeing all that could be seen, and no traveller, who has passed that way, has been able to see more than he did.

Arrived at the Court, Coryate was not long in catching a sight of the great Emperor, "who presenteth himself thrice every day without fail to his nobles, at the rising of the sun, which he adoreth by the elevation of his hands; at noon, and at five of the clock in the evening; but he standeth in a room aloft, alone by himself, and looketh upon them from a window, that hath an embroidered sumptuous coverture, supported with two silver pillasters to yield shadow into him." At the palace the wanderer saw the monarch's collection of wild beasts, the feeding of which cost him "at the least ten thousand pound sterling

¹ Purchas, *Pilgrims* Vol. I., p. 595.

a day," and here he saw elephants fight, which he describes as "the bravest sight in the world."¹ He was fortunate enough to arrive upon the interesting occasion of the royal birthday, when the Mogul was solemnly weighed, and his weight in gold distributed to the poor. The Prince himself "is of complexion neither black nor white, but of a middle betwixt them. I know not how to express it with a more expressive and significant epitheton than olive ; an olive colour his face presenteth. He is of a seemly composition of body, of a stature little unequal (as I guess not without grounds of probability) to mine, but much more corpulent than myself."² At Ajmir our traveller stayed perfecting himself in Oriental languages, of his great skill in which several curious instances survive. Perhaps the most remarkable of these was shown in his dealing with a Hindu laundress of the ambassador's house, "who had such a freedom and liberty of speech that she would sometimes scold, brawl, and rail from the sunrising to the sunset. One day he undertook her in her own language (Hindostani), and by eight of the clock in the morning so silenced her that she had not one word more to speak."³ A clearer proof of honest Tom's linguistic skill could not be desired ; for he who would undertake to silence a scolding jade needs lungs of brass and a tongue of flame.

In the meantime, James the First's ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, arrived at Ajmir with his suite, including Coryate's friend, Edward Terry, the chaplain to the embassy. Roe treated the traveller as one who was perfectly familiar with his eccentricities, and though he was consistently kind to him, strove to keep him in the background as much as possible. But Tom had no affection for the background, and on one memorable day he forced himself upon the Mogul's notice, and when asked what his business was, he broke forth into the following characteristic oration in Persian : "Lord Protector of the world, all hail to you ; I am a poor traveller and world-seer, which am come hither from a far country, namely England, which the ancient historians thought to have been situated in the farthest bounds of the west, and which is the queen of all the islands in the world. The cause of my coming hither is for four respects. When I

¹ and ² Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol. I., p. 581.

³ Terry, *A Voyage to East India*, p. 67.

heard of the fame of your Majesty, I hastened hither with speed, and travelled very cheerfully to see your glorious Court. Secondly, to see your Majesty's elephants, which kind of beasts I have not seen in any other country. Thirdly, to see your famous river Ganges, which is the captain of all the rivers of the world. The fourth is this, to intreat your Majesty that you would vouchsafe your gracious *Pass*, that I may travel into the country of Tartaria to the city of Samarcand, to visit the blessed sepulchre of the Lord of the Corners (this is a title that is given in this country to Tamberlaine in that Persian language ; and whereas they call him the Lord of the Corners, by that they mean that he was Lord of the Corners of the world, that is the highest and supreme monarch of the universe), whose fame by reason of his wars and victories is published over the whole world ; perhaps he is not altogether so famous in his own country of Tartaria as in England. Moreover, I have a great desire to see the blessed tomb of the Lord of the Corners, for this cause : for that when I was at Constantinople I saw a notable building in a pleasant garden, near the said city, where the Christian Emperor that was called Emmanuel made a sumptuous great banquet to the Lord of the Corners, after he had taken the Sultan Bajazet in fetters of gold and put him in a cage of iron. These four causes moved me to come out of my native country thus far, having travelled afoot through Turkey and Persia ; so far have I traced the world into this country that my pilgrimage hath accomplished three thousand miles, wherein I have sustained much labour and toil, the like whereof no mortal man in this world did ever perform, to see the blessed face of your Majesty, since the first day that you were inaugurated in your glorious monarchal throne." ¹

This sufficiently exalted oration, which smacks of the man who uttered it, had the desired effect. The great Mogul's curiosity was aroused by his novel suitor, whom he took to be a kind of Christian fakir. He detained Coryate for some time in conversation, and endeavoured to dissuade him from his proposed visit to Samarcand, which he said would in all probability prove fatal to him from the excessive bigotry of the Tartars to all Christians. He concluded his interview by casting a purse containing

¹ Coryate, *Letter to his Mother*, vide Taylor, *Works*, folios 84, 85.

one hundred rupees from "the window through which he looked out, into a sheet tied up by the corners, and hanging very near the ground." The benefaction was doubtless so small because the Prince esteemed Coryate a religious man under a vow of poverty. But small as it was, it amply satisfied our traveller, who would have sent some of it home to his mother as a filial offering, had he been able to find any trustworthy means of conveyance. She was in no want of her son's care; her first husband had died, but she had married again, and thus was placed beyond the reach of need. Coryate's letters home are very touching; in every one of them the love of home breathes forth, and the wanderer sends greetings to his old friends with the pathetic addition, "if they be yet alive." From Ajmir he sent a gorgeous greeting to his friends who met at the Mermaid, and as he wrote the nonsensical and highfalutin lines, the picture of smoky London with all its precious associations would rise before him. He would hear in fancy the thunderous tones of Ben Jonson's mighty laughter, while he was reading the communication from the Court of the Great Mogul, and he would seem to see the familiar faces of the well-known band of cronies, who sat, and drank, and quarrelled, and made their peace again and again.¹ The list of persons to be individually saluted in this quaint document serves to show that, though Tom might be their butt, they at least were very dear to him for the sake of old acquaintance, while he was yet in the train of Prince Henry.

What Sir Thomas Roe thought of Coryate's oration does not appear in precise terms; but there cannot be the slightest doubt that if he had had his own way the speech would never have been delivered. Even if he were present, the worthy ambassador would not be likely to understand the Persian harangue of his officious countryman, whom he regarded as merely an inoffensive fool; and when the episode was over, he would certainly administer a cutting rebuke. But posthumous rebukes did not disturb honest Tom, who by his shrewdness had outwitted the ambassador and secured a double object. He had gained a welcome replenishment of his almost empty purse, and he had had the honour of a personal interview with the greatest and haughtiest of the Oriental monarchs. The tone in which he describes his audience

¹ Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol. I., pp. 585, 586.

to his mother is full of triumph, and he thought so well of his Persian harangue, that he sent her a copy to show to the clergy and other learned men in the neighbourhood of Yeovil, where she was at that time living. When the occurrence took place cannot be certainly fixed, save that it must have happened between the beginning of the year 1616 and the end of October in the same year. Coryate spent a little more than two years at Ajmir; but he did not confine himself to the capital alone. Whenever he heard of an object of interest, he set out to see it, and though he did not always succeed in his quest, he contrived to see more than any of his countrymen had even heard of, much less actually witnessed. Once at least he watched the Hindus at one of their sacred festivals, who were busied in casting gold and ornaments into the Ganges, which they venerated as their father and creator. That this sight would impress him with wonder and disgust can well be imagined; to a sincere Protestant like himself the superstitious ceremony would be extremely repellent, and he would be hard put to it to refrain from making an outspoken protest.

Amongst the numerous places which he visited was Mandoa, or Mandy, where "One Mr. Richard Steele, a merchant and servant to the East-India Company, came unto us from Surat to Mandoa, the place then of the Mogul's residence, at which time Mr. Coryate was there with us. This merchant had not long before travelled overland from East India through Persia, and so to Constantinople, and so for England; who in his travel homeward had met Tom Coryate, as he was journeying towards East India. Mr. Steele then told him, that when he was in England, King James (then living) inquired after him, and when he certified the King of his meeting him on the way, the King replied, *Is that fool yet living?* Which, when our pilgrim heard, it seemed to trouble him very much, because the King spake no more nor no better of him; saying that Kings would speak of poor men what they pleased."¹ James's pronouncement, if it be literally true, as seems probable from that wiseacre's habit of mind, does little honour to his insight into character. He had had many opportunities of seeing the man whom he summarily reviled, and he might have read his book, if he would. Had Coryate retorted on his Solomonic Majesty,

¹ Terry, *A Voyage to East India*, pp. 69, 70.

he would have been able to call him fool with no less justice, who suffered himself to be deluded by handsome scoundrels, and who could appreciate no originality which did not begin and end with himself. Richard Steele, who doubtless thought the King's remark a good joke, acted with much unkindness in not keeping so cruel a speech to himself; but the element of cruelty seems only to sharpen a jest, so long as it is made at another's expense.

Nor does this story in any way imply that Coryate was over-eager for praise, as some of his critics assert; he wanted bare justice, which James was incapable of doing at most times, and in the present case that sapient trifler was flagrantly unjust. Terry,¹ who accuses his chamber-fellow of overweening vanity, is not wholly happy in his illustrations thereof. He represents Tom as fainting once at Mandoa, when his bodily health was weak, from the mere thought that he might not live to write the account of his travels in the East, which was expected from him, when he returned home. He might do this and yet not be over vain; his first book had been an unique success, and he knew that his journey through Asia would be far more interesting than his travels in Europe from its greater novelty. Furthermore, he was in weakly health at the time, and the combination of causes might easily have made him unconscious for a time. Again, he is represented as always thrusting himself into the conversation to win fame, or at least notoriety. But it must never be forgotten that a man who spent much time in solitary travel was likely enough to talk freely when he got an opportunity, and that his chief topic could hardly fail to be the great and glorious things which he had seen. Besides, every traveller knows that he gains as much information by conversation as from many guide-books, and there were no guide-books in Coryate's day. That he talked much about himself in company is very possible, but that his chief object in travelling was to secure fame cannot be fairly asserted, nor sustained for a moment. He went abroad because he longed to see whatever he could, and though he was naturally unwilling that the results of his toils should perish with him, there can be no doubt that the very sight of unfamiliar races and objects was in itself a sufficient reward. The interest with which he made his observations, the closeness of his scrutiny into

¹ Terry, *A Voyage to East India*, pp. 71, 72.

the things which he saw in his journeys, his intelligent though rather crabbed accounts of these, point him out as a man whose delight it was to travel for travelling's sake, and who found his recompense in what he saw. Had he been able to return home and write another book, the very moment that he had gained sufficient money, he would have set off again to some little-known region, to increase the stock of his information, and to rejoice in strange sights.

But Coryate's foreboding that he was not to reach England was fulfilled, to the great loss of posterity. His sample notes of what he saw in India and in the East have passed away with him, and only a few scattered letters and fragments remain in the interesting pages of Purchas, which serve to whet the student's appetite and to make him long for more. Persuaded by the wise advice of the Mogul, he determined to make his way to Surat, and to abandon his hopes of penetrating into the interior of Tartary. Sir Thomas Roe gave him a letter to Libbæus (Chapman, British Consul at Aleppo, bidding him give the traveller ten pounds; but he couched his note of commendation in terms both insulting and undeserved. "Mr. (Chapman," runs this portion of the letter, "when you shall hand these letters, I desire you to receive the bearer of them, Mr. Thomas Coryate, with courtesy; for you shall find him a very honest, poor wretch: and, further, I must entreat you to furnish him with ten pounds."¹ We cannot wonder that the recipient of such a letter, who was a gentleman by birth and education, should resent some of its terms, which fastened a stigma upon the very man whom it professed to commend. The Consul would treat Tom as a kind of harmless lunatic upon his arrival, if he could bring with him no truer commendation than this. Coryate protested against the invidious phrase—which the ambassador, who had meant to be kind, but who had failed from want of a just appreciation of the man, wisely altered to suit the truth and the bearer of his letter. Terry himself seems to think that this nicety upon Tom's part was a piece of mere vanity; whereby he shows that he, too, did not understand a man who was far abler in certain directions than himself. In all probability, had he received such a letter he would have been

¹ Terry, *A Voyage to East India*, pp. 70, 71,

no less wounded ; so much easier is it to feel personal insults than to judge of those given to another.

Fortified by the altered letter which he had received, and in spite of Sir Thomas Roe's kindly solicitations to remain where he was until he had quite regained his wonted health, Coryate turned his face towards Surat, when he was not in a fit condition to travel so far on foot. His long toil through the heat of the Eastern sun, and the frequent hardship endured along the roads, to say nothing of the scantiness of provisions, had undermined a naturally strong constitution, and he must have made his last journey with great difficulty. But he did reach Surat, suffering from a severe flux, and in a very weakly state of body. The moment he arrived at the quarters of the English merchants in that place his fame had preceded him, and he was welcomed with extreme kindness. In an evil hour for himself he overheard one of them speak of sack, which they had brought over from England, and immediately a longing came over him, though he was a man of great temperance, to taste the wine which was so toothsome to his countrymen of that day. "Sack, sack !" he exclaimed ; "is there any such thing as *sack*? Pray you, give me some sack."¹ Had his entertainers or he himself been wise, sack was the last thing which they would have offered, or he accepted, in his weakly health. But he rushed on to his fate, in order to appease a longing to taste once more a wine upon which he had not set his eyes for several years. The inevitable result was that his flux increased with great violence, and he reached the end of all his earthly journeys in the month of December, 1617. Thus his own sorrowful prediction was fulfilled, that he would not live to write the account of his last travels, and one of the most distinguished of the world's wayfarers, who had braved a thousand perils by land and by water, was stricken down by a draught of inopportune wine.

The merchants laid what was left of Thomas Coryate in the English fashion outside the harbour, "under a little monument, like one of those which are usually made in our churchyards." This may have been increased to a tumulus, as Dr. Jessopp asserts, with a somewhat imaginative exaggeration ; but of such a tumulus Terry, who had seen the grave, says nothing.² He suggests an epitaph, in which his Pegasus appears to halt upon more than one

¹ Terry, *A Voyage to East India*, p. 72.

² *Idem ibidem*, p. 72.

foot, and which hobbles along in well-meant but ill-executed verses of his own unpoetical fancy:

“Here lies the wanderer of his age,
 Who living did rejoice,
 Not out of need, but choice,
 To make his life a pilgrimage.

He spent full many precious days
 As if he had his being
 To waste his life in seeing;
 More thought to spend, to gain him praise.

Some weaknesses appeared his stains:
 Though some seem very wise,
 Some yet are otherwise.
 Good gold may be allowed its grains.

Many the places which he ey'd;
 And though he should have been
 In all parts unseen,
 His eye had not been satisfied.

To fill it when he found no room,
 By the choice things he saw
 In Europe and vast Asia,
 Fell blinded in this narrow tomb.”¹

This epitaph, which has a posthumous ring about it, pointing to the fact that it was written some time after the death of its subject, when Terry put the notes of his book together in 1655, deserves little commendation, either for its music or its appropriateness to Coryate. It has the simple air and the prosaic sound of some of the *Lyrical Ballads*, which are neither lyrical nor ballads. But it will serve to show that, though Terry did not understand his chamber-fellow, he did appreciate his great gifts.

The worthy chaplain has made several mistakes with regard to Coryate, to one of which allusion has been made in a previous note. But he gives one indication that the traveller had by no means exhausted his curiosity, but had intended, if ever he returned home, to lay by a sum sufficient to enable him to take a ten years' journey through the East. Terry, who would prefer the comparative comfort of travelling with an ambassador's suite, could hardly be expected to enter into Coryate's enthusiasm for seeing the great nations of the world, and he manifestly thought him not a little touched with madness. Such is the usual fate of one who is before his age, and who is certainly not untinged by eccentricity. Other

¹ Terry, *A Voyage to East India*, p. 73.

travellers had been before Thomas Coryate; but though they were not unobservant of what they saw, and had journeyed with far greater comfort, his sight was keener than theirs, and his observations were for the most part more exact. His childlike curiosity scorned no investigation, however humble, and it is just in his examination of what other travellers have often deemed trivial that his peculiar excellence consists. He did not content himself with seeing others riding on elephants—he rode one himself, in the position of a mahout, and his picture, seated on his ungainly steed, is preserved, as he himself intended that it should be preserved, to form a frontispiece for one of his future works. He never took another man's testimony on trust where the thing itself was to be seen; wherever he could contrive it, he went to see everything for himself. Neither was it his habit to tell glorified traveller's tales, like Baron Munchausen. Extravagant as he was in his attempts, more or less successful, at wit, when he came to describe what he had seen, he set it down faithfully and without exaggeration. He was seldom over-credulous, and though some unfounded legends have found their way into his writings, wherever he was able to examine for himself he has left a truthful narrative of the results of his examination. He does not indulge in raptures over natural scenery; indeed, the careful reader of his works will come to the conclusion that he had only a limited perception of the beauties of Nature. He could perceive with pleasure the fertility of the soil of the lands through which he passed, and the richness of their crops, or the numbers of their domestic animals; but, like many another of his countrymen, cultivated Nature interested him more than the wilder beauties of her untouched savagery.

But when he has to describe the habits of men and the curious customs of the various nations, Coryate is at his very best. He frequented their religious festivals, he went into their markets, he wandered about towns and along the countryside, noting the peculiarities of every passer-by. There is something attractive and almost pathetic in the picture of this quaint and inquisitive man, who moved over the earth now in company, now in lonely solitude, peering into the faces of strange men, searching out primeval tombs of the heroes of ancient mythology, rejoicing in human festivals, and watching gravely the

punishment of criminals. His thin figure rises from the past, clad at one time in travel-stained European garments, at another dressed in the gorgeous costume and using the language of a Persian. Pausing wherever there was anything of interest, walking many miles out of his direct way to see some spot hallowed by venerable tradition or consecrated by religious association, jogging along in a springless country cart, carried on the shoulders of grumbling servitors, he wended his lonely way. Solitary he must always have been, much as he loved congenial companionship. Few could entertain or even understand his love of painful travel, for the most part on foot; few could appreciate the delight of seeing strange sights and foreign nations at the expense of much labour and more comfort. But Coryate cared little for the trouble which it cost him to see what he wanted to see, and if he saw it he was more than content. Lonely amongst his fellows he wandered, talking much whenever he had an opportunity, but still alone; alone in his zeal for travel he passed along, and but few of his works survive to tell their unvarnished tale of trials bravely endured and dangers resolutely encountered.

His *Crudities*, as has been already pointed out, is a book full of interest to any modern traveller, who in easier fashion and at ten times the cost has followed in his footsteps, or shot by in the rumbling train the scenes which he saw more closely while wandering on foot. His descriptions of the towns through which he passed are vivid and exact; their legendary history is in many cases given, and there is a scholarly flavour of comprehensive learning about all of them. Coryate knew his Greek and Latin authorities with wonderful exactitude, and the quotations with which he garnishes his works are for the most part selected with marvellous judgment and apposite application. That he hated Popery and Mohammedanism alike may be seen from his pregnant remarks upon their errors in their respective places. Once, indeed, during his residence in India, he is said to have stood on the top of a tower, and when the cry was raised, "Allah is the only God, and Mohammed is his prophet," to have replied in a loud voice, "There is only one God and Jesus Christ His Son; Mohammed is an impostor."¹ The tolerance of the then ruling race in India, under the government of

¹ Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol. II. p. 1,476.

the Great Mogul, was, however, so great that he escaped from any consequences of his uncalled-for rashness. But according to his lights, which were tolerably bright, he was a sincere and humble-minded Christian, with somewhat of a Puritan tinge of rigour. He did not, upon all occasions, make such a boast of his profession of faith; and it was only under the overmastering influence of sincere conviction that he was moved to uplift his voice in the face of the manifest sincerity of the Mussulmans around him. His sympathies with even the superstitions of men were keen and kindly, and if he himself rejected the superstitions with all the force of a strong and narrow mind, he could yet describe them with a care which shows how clearly he recognised the meaning of these cherished beliefs to those who believed them.

This, then, was the man whom the wits of the Court of the slobbering Solomon of Whitehall regarded as a fit subject for their idle and insane mirth. This was the so-called Court fool of his age, whose unaffected simplicity made him the choice target for chance arrows, and at the same time preserved him from much of their sting. This was the man whom the empty-headed wits of Prince Henry's train could find no better way of treating than to carry him into the Court in a trunk. This was Ben Jonson's "most catholic coxcomb," to whose sound and sensible work he could only stimulate his fellow-wits to contribute mocking testimonials. And what was more, neither Ben himself nor his numerous poetical children seem to have realized that Tom was, in all probability, playing upon their weaknesses for his private purpose of making a purse for his travels. As a letter-writer to his numerous friends, and, above all, to his mother, there are few more interesting correspondents of his own or any subsequent period. As a keen observer and a faithful narrator of his observations, he had no rival amongst the travellers of his own time. As a man, though somewhat whimsical and eccentric, he was a lively companion and a cheerful, pious soul, who walked along his weary way robbing it of much of its weariness by his stout heart and his uncomplaining endurance. What if he were a little vain? Other men have showed more vanity with infinitely less reason, and vanity was at least quite as salient a characteristic of "royal Ben" himself as ever it was of Tom Coryate. Neither had

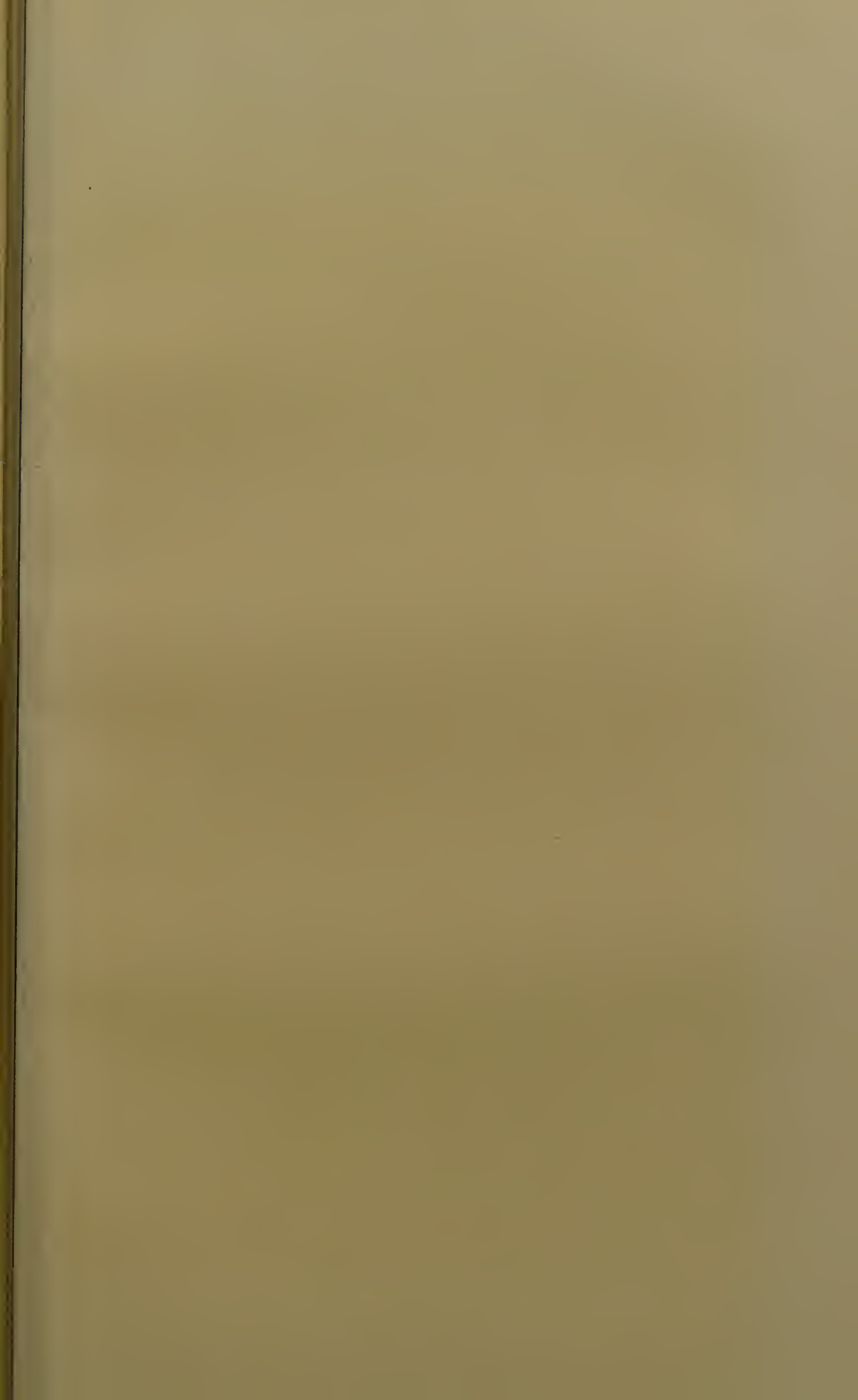
James any reason to reproach him on this score, for a vainer king has seldom occupied any throne.

What if he loved to talk of what he had seen, and to commend himself for having seen it? Other men have loved to talk, and with less reason, and all men love the story of their own exploits an hundred times more than the more profitable narrative of the deeds of others. Besides, long solitude inspires much talk, when the solitude is periodically interrupted; and when a man has something worth telling, he may well be pardoned for engrossing the conversation. What if he were eccentric? Other men have been to the full as eccentric without any gifts by way of compensation. Coryate has earned for himself an unfortunate reputation by his readiness to adapt himself to the follies of one of the most foolish Courts in our history. In this, doubtless, he forfeited much of his dignity, and his memory has smarted from the injustice which he has done himself thereby. It is time, then, to clear his real reputation from the witless sneers of inferior men, and to point out that underneath the chequered mantle of his whimsical eccentricity there beat a warm human heart and a burning eagerness to see other lands and other men. A learned man with no small extravagance of style, when he was minded to ride his high horse, he rode that unsafe steed so persistently during one period of his life that he has almost broken the neck of his well-deserved reputation by riding for frequent and inglorious falls. But in spite of his ostentatious absurdity, which was a fashion rather than a habit of his mind, he was in himself a kindly, gentle soul, far readier to suffer than to do a wrong, a philosopher who was rich in being content with little, an author of a by no means unpicturesque style, as the faithful students of his works must confess, and, beyond all else, as one of the most remarkable of the world's great travellers, Coryate lived and passed away, and there is now no mark to tell where his dust is lying near the murmur of the Indian Ocean.

Passionately anxious he might be for fame, but the irony of fate has been unkind to his reputation, and he is remembered rather as the fantastical jester of a childish Court than as the distinguished traveller and patient observer of men and cities. It is time to let the kindly veil of forgetfulness drop over his extravagances,

his forced witticisms, his highfalutin speeches, and his actual follies. These have injured his good name long enough, and they may be decently buried with the witty fools whose sympathetic un wisdom called them into being. Perish the laboured jests by all means, and the world will be none the poorer; but let posterity justly and gratefully call to mind the pathetic story of one of the pioneers of foreign travel. Though he did much to open up to later travellers countries unknown save by dim repute to the men of his day, by the spite of fortune he passed away with his yearning ambition unaccomplished and the narrative of his most interesting journey unwritten. If he loved fame, let his name be remembered now for the real achievements of his patient and toilsome journeys, and not by the follies and eccentricities, which alone attracted the superficial notice of his contemporaries. Above all else, where it is possible to lay hands upon them, let his works be read alike for their interest, their accuracy, and their quaint observations. So will he live as best he deserves to live; and so would he desire to live in the hearts of posterity if he might have his way. Lay the wreath of laurel not on his shoes with Henry Peacham, but upon his brow, which is the fitting meed of the neglected men of genius who have deserved well of their race.¹

¹ A new edition of the *Crudities*, and of the rest of his works, with a collection of all of the stray passages which bear upon his life, is much wanted in these days, when less interesting works are being reprinted on every hand.





SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

From Russell Smith's Reprint of his Works (1856).

THE COURTIER

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY

"Virtute ambire oportet, non fautoribus."

PLAUTUS, *Amphitruo*, Prologue, 18.

WHEN a man of distinguished talent and varied accomplishments devotes his attention to the acquisition of place and influence in a corrupt Court, he himself, be he by nature as virtuous as Socrates, stands in grave danger of contamination. It is impossible for a long space of time to tolerate gross immorality without obscuring the moral sense, and he who lightly winks at unrestrained vice in those who are more highly placed than himself is not likely to preserve his original purity unstained. That the Court of James I., despite the fact of that self-conceited monarch's theological learning and religious orthodoxy, was one of the most vicious which has disgraced our history is too well known to need any laboured proof. That the king was not devoted to the particular vice of his good-natured but too susceptible grandson may be quite true ; but if he had no mistresses of his own, he never checked his courtiers in the full course of their licence, but had an undue fondness for listening to tales of their immoral practices. A veteran gossip, who loved to hear any piece of scandal, however scandalous, so long as it did not trench upon his prerogative, or come within the compass of the laws of the land, James shambled through life with little perception of the necessity of moral purity and with no discriminating refinement. The impurity of his court may have been outdone by that of Charles II. ; but that is the only palliation which can be urged in its favour, and the men who gathered about the King either furnished fit themes by their intrigues for his ribald witticisms or fed his natural appetite for coarseness with their disgusting jests. Nor were the women ill-matched with

the men, though, as is their wont, they strove to hide their sins under the decent veil of secrecy. The historians of the period have crammed their works with lurid stories of the prevailing vices, and though their narratives may from exaggeration gain in spice of a certain crude and offensive kind, they form pleasant reading neither for those who worship the past nor for those who take any real interest in the well-being of their country. Sir Anthony Weldon, in his *Court and Character of King James*, which, though not published until 1650, professes to give a correct account of things actually seen and heard at first hand, has left a series of pictures which can excite little but wondering disgust in the mind of the reflective student. That the story of corruption has not been unduly magnified the following dark history will sufficiently prove, and those who desire further demonstration may consult contemporary writers for similar tales of licentious intrigue and appalling debauchery.

That a man of nice moral scruples should have desired to make his way in such a Court must always be incredible; yet Sir Thomas Overbury, whom his admirers represent as an amiable martyr, and who, in fact, was the victim of the unscrupulous revenge of an infamous woman, made it his supreme ambition to rise to power by the favour of the King. This able but ill-fated man was the son of Nicholas Overbury, of Bourton-on-the-Hill, in Eastern Gloucestershire, by Mary, daughter of Giles Palmer, of Compton-Scorfen, near Ilmington, in Warwickshire, where he was born in the house of his maternal grandfather in 1581.¹ His mother's brother, Edward Palmer, was a man of considerable wealth, who intended at one time to use his money for the philanthropic purpose of founding an academy in Virginia. He even went so far as to purchase an island off the coast of that then barely civilized colony for a very large sum, which was long called Palmer's Island. But the scheme failed from lack of personal supervision, and he died before he was able to fulfil his design by going to the scene of operations.² His nephew was a youth of much promise and marked ability, but of whose early life little is known. In September, 1595, he was entered as a gentleman commoner of Queen's College, Oxford,

¹ Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol. II., col. 133.

² Winstanley, *Worthies* (1684), p. 285.

where he soon distinguished himself, and, after acquiring a competent knowledge in logic and philosophy, he took his bachelor's degree in 1598. Wood insinuates that it was because he was a squire's son that he was permitted to graduate in his third instead of in his fourth year, according to the more usual custom.¹ But it must be remembered that Laud's Statutes, by which four years' residence was rendered obligatory, were not yet in force, and thus no special favour need be claimed for Overbury. Nicholas Overbury, himself a lawyer of some eminence, desired his son to pursue the same lucrative profession, and had him entered at the Middle Temple immediately after he had left college. But the younger Overbury, though by no means incapable of drudgery, does not seem to have appreciated his legal studies, and he soon began to devote himself to literature. He does not, however, appear to have published anything in his own lifetime, such of his works as survive being posthumously printed.

Somewhere about this time Overbury travelled in France, and possibly through other parts of Europe, of which he has left an interesting narrative, which shows how closely he studied the political circumstances of the countries through which he passed.² His literary productions were doubtless handed about in manuscript, after the manner of the time, and more than one of the contemporary wits has left flattering testimony to their excellence. It will be convenient at this point to estimate Overbury's talents in this kind, which were by no means contemptible. His best-known poem is *The Wife*, which, in spite of its difficult conceits, contains both much sound sense and occasional flashes of poetry of a high order. The concluding stanzas, which sum up the poet's philosophy, are here given, and it need only be remarked, that even if he had not been cut off in the flower of his age, he was likely to have remained a bachelor, from the number of perfections which he required in his ideal spouse:—

“No circumstance doth *beauty* beautify,
Like graceful *fashion*, native *comeliness*.
Nay, ev'n gets pardon for *deformity*;
Art cannot aught beget, but may increase;
When *nature* had fixt *beauty*, perfect made,
Something she left for *motion* to add.

¹ Wood, *Athenæ*, Vol. II., col. 133.

² *Works*, edited by Dr. Rimbault, pp. 221-251.

But let that *fashion* more to *modesty*
 Tend, than *assurance* ; *modesty* doth set
 The face in her just place, from *passions* free,
 'Tis both the *mind's* and *body's beauty met* ;
 But *modesty* no virtue can we see ;
 That is the face's only chastity.

Where *goodness* fails, 'twixt ill and *ill* that stands ;
 Whence 'tis, that *women*, though they weaker be,
 And their desire more strong, yet on their hands
 The *chastity* of *men* doth often lie ;
Lust would more common be than any one,
 Could it, as other sins, be done *alone*.

All these *good parts* a *perfect woman* make ;
 Add *love to me*, they make a *perfect wife* ;
 Without her *love*, her *beauty* should I take,
 As that of *pictures*, dead ; *that* gives it life ;
 Till then her *beauty* like the sun doth shine
Alike to all, *that* makes it only *mine*.

And of that *love*, let *reason father* be,
 And *passion mother* ; let it from the one
 His *being* take, the other his *degree* ;
 Self-love (which second loves are built upon)
 Will make *me* (if not *her*) her love respect ;
 No man but favours his own worth's effect.

As *good* and *wise* ; so she be *fit* for me,
 That is to *will*, and *not to will*, the same.
 My *wife* is my *adopted self*, and she
 As me, so what I love, to love must frame ;
 For when by marriage both in one concur,
 Woman converts to man, not man to her."¹

Whether these stanzas, with their puzzling *italics*, contain any flashes of true poetry or not may be a matter for discussion, but no one will dispute either their common-sense or their wit. Still it remains a fact that Overbury, who could sing so well of the virtues of an ideal wife, never tasted the joys of wedlock, else he might have pitched his expectations in a lower key, and found that the last couplet was not strictly in accordance with truth. Nay, his own terrible experience was to show him how a woman was able to bring him to utter destruction by alienating his patron's affection from him. The first edition of *The Wife* was posthumously printed in 1614, and in the form of a tiny duodecimo is to be found in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

A second edition of this popular poem, accompanied by a few of the *Characters*, was issued the same year in quarto, and was followed by many others in rapid suc-

¹ *Works* as above (1856), pp. 43-45.

cession. The *Characters* would seem to have been drawn from the similar pieces of Theophrastus, nor can they be said to be in any degree less pointed than those of their Greek exemplar. That Overbury was profoundly and properly impressed with the blessing and advantage of having a good wife has been seen from his poem, and is evidenced even more emphatically in his prose description of her necessary qualifications. She "is a man's best moveable," he says, "a scion incorporate with the stock, bringing sweet fruit; one that to her husband is more than a friend, less than trouble: an equal with him in the yoke. Calamities and troubles she shares alike, nothing pleases her that doth not him. She is relative in all. She frames her nature unto his howsoever: the *hyacinth* follows not the *sun* more willingly. Stubbornness and obstinacy are herbs that grow not in her garden. She leaves tattling to the gossips of the town, and is more seen than heard. Her household is her charge; her care to that makes her seldom *non-resident*. Her pride is but to be cleanly, and her thrift not to be prodigal. By her discretion she hath children, not wantons; a husband without her is but a misery in man's apparel; none but she hath an aged husband, to whom she is both a staff and a chair. To conclude, she is both wise and religious, which makes her all this."¹ Amid the mannish selfishness of the foregoing description, it must be confessed, even by those against whom its wit is directed, that the author shows a very sufficient appreciation of the kind of wife who makes home a real home of supreme comfort and happiness.

Such a wife, as Overbury would have every man choose, may or may not be rare; she is at all events a good wife. What a woman writing about men might have to say on the score of a good husband, who is, perhaps, rarer than a good wife, is not now the question at issue; still her unsolicited views would have an interest at the present day, however trivial such a detail would have been esteemed at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Our author had no affection for the rigid morality of the then growing party of the Puritans. A gay and witty man himself, their demure air and stiff carriage annoyed him, and shrewd as he was, he was unable to pierce beneath the surface, and perceive the noble though narrow

¹ *Works*, pp. 72, 73.

principles, by which they were moved. In his scoffing manner, he says, with a touch of spiteful contempt: "A Puritan is a diseased piece of *Apocrypha*; bind him to the *Bible*, and he corrupts the whole text; ignorance and fat feed are his founders; his nurses, railing Rabbis, and round breeches; his life is but a borrowed blast of wind; for between two religions, as between two doors, he is ever whistling." And again, "Show him a ring, he runs back like a bear, and hates square dealing as allied to caps; a pair of organs blow him out o' the parish, and are the only glyster-pipes to cool him."¹ The bitterness of this contemptuous reference, with its hit at the Puritan's hatred of the square caps of the bishops, is equalled by a juster condemnation of the *Precisian*, of whom he asserts that "he is so sure of *his* salvation, that he will not change places in heaven with the Virgin Mary."² That the youthful satirist had had opportunity of marking the peculiarities of both of the victims of his wit is clear; but that he showed equal discrimination in his characterisations is not so evident. But it must be remembered that the recollection of the splendour of the age of Elizabeth rendered the true appreciation of the simplicity of the Puritans next to impossible. The fine gentleman, who prided himself upon his toilet, and upon his highly seasoned conversation, had inevitably but small regard for one who scorned alike fopperies of dress and coarse witticisms. The Courtier scoffed at the Biblical language of his grimmer fellow, though, in some respects at least, he might have followed that stern pattern to his advantage in this world and the next. Furthermore, the King hated all Puritans, and it was a cheap way of gaining his voluminous smile to sneer at their expense.

A man of Overbury's mercurial temperament had little sympathy with the *Melancholy Man*, of whom he says, with a possible allusion to Robert Burton: "He thinks business, but never doth any; he is all contemplation, no action"; and again, "His spirits and the sun are enemies; the sun bright and warm, his humour black and cold; variety of foolish apparitions people his head, they suffer him not to breathe, according to the necessities of Nature, which makes him sup a draught of as much air at once as would serve at thrice."³ While he was at Oxford, he must have seen Democritus Junior wandering about by

¹ *Works*, pp. 80, 81.² *Idem*, p. 103.³ *Idem*, p. 74.

himself, though he could not have read the famous *Anatomy*; but he was incapable of entering into the feelings of a man who was only melancholy because he could not help himself. Again, his sarcasm, or rather his satire, is shown in all its severity in his definition of a *chambermaid* as one who "is her mistress's she-secretary, and keeps the box of her teeth, her hair, and her painting very private."¹

In his pleasanter vein of wit he remarks concerning a footman, "Let him be never so well made, his legs are not matches, for he is still setting the best foot forward. He will never be a staid man, for he has had a running head of his own ever since his childhood. His mother (which, out of question, was a light-heeled wench) knew it, yet let him run his race; thinking age would reclaim him from his wild courses. He is very long-winded; and, without doubt, but that he hates naturally to serve on horseback, he had proved an excellent trumpet."² There is more to the same purpose, and if Overbury's remarks cannot be said to be wholly good-natured, he at least shows himself less severe and less ill-natured too in this bright little sketch; it may be a caricature, but it is not a grotesque, as are some of his *Characters*.

Of all the classes of oddities which his observant eyes had marked, he speaks with most bitter contempt, perhaps, of those unlucky rhymesters who had literally, like the immortal *Thomas Tucker* celebrated by Gammer Gurton, to *sing for their supper*, to say nothing of their more important meals. He thus lashes one of these luckless wretches, to whom fortune had been already sufficiently unkind: "The rhymer," he exclaims, "is a fellow whose face is hatcht all over with impudence, and should be hanged or pilloried, 'tis armed for it. He is a juggler with words, yet practises the art of most uncleanly conveyance. He doth boggle very often; and because himself winks at it, thinks 'tis not perceived; the main thing that ever he did was the tune he sang to. There is nothing in the earth so pitiful, no, not an ape-carrier, he is not worth thinking of, and, therefore, I must leave him, as Nature left him, a dung-hill not well laid together."³ With such fierce satirical vehemence, not wholly untouched, however, by traces of delicate and graceful wit, does Overbury lash the follies and vices of his day, while, at the same time, he warmly commends the virtues. The *Elder*

¹ *Works*, p. 101.

² *Idem*, p. 114.

³ *Idem*, pp. 150, 151.

Brother, a Soldier, a Sailor, a Covetous Man, and a host of others, pass before the whipping-post, and each suffers in his turn from strokes neatly laid on and daintily administered. A fop, for instance, "is the *cinnamon-tree*, whose bark is worth more than his body."¹ So the author arrogates to himself the lofty position of censor of society, and with no small pungency and power displays the folly and judges the eccentricities of less wise mortals. Something of his own character reveals itself between the lines which he has written ; nor does he stand in an altogether amiable light in his analysis of others. There are two distinct kinds of satirists in English literature : the first laughs at the world and its unwisdom with a sincere but a stern and, perhaps, self-sufficient contempt, while the second is fully conscious of its own absurdities, and laughs kindly with, as well as at, the absurdities of others. The former class may be called, for want of a better term, wits, while the latter may be ranked as humorists. The majority of Overbury's *Characters* set him in the first class with the wits, though here and there glints of a kindlier humour break forth to enliven his generally severe tirades and scathing denunciations. Perhaps, in no author does the reader recognise more clearly how cruel wit can be, nor could any one more transparently display a considerable amount of vanity. But, in spite of these blemishes of disposition, rather than of intellect, the *Characters* remain full of interest, and their prose style is of the best in its own kind ; neat, piquant, pithy, forcible, and invariably lucid, his English is always pleasant to read, and is freer from artificialities and affectation than that of most of the writers of his day.

The collection of *Characters* is followed by a spicy hodge-podge of gossip, wit, fact and fiction under the comprehensive title of *News from Any-whence*, to which Donne and others of the contemporary wits contributed. The little work consists of pungent and pointed paragraphs, which abound in interesting pieces of scandal, scraps of thought, expressions of playful fancy and abundance of the invariable conceits which so greatly disturb the less affected taste of the modern critic. But, for all its faults, the little pamphlet is full of vigorous life ; its redolence of its own age, of the thought and manners of its contemporaries, must always give it a peculiar value,

¹ *Works*, p. 65.

and though the reader may often wonder wherein the point of more than one jest lies, he may yet derive profit and enlightenment from its perusal. Seven years after Overbury's death, the popularity of his works induced the publisher to issue a translation or imitation of Ovid, entitled *The First and Second Part of the Remedy of Love*. This poem, like some of the rest of his writings, proves plainly enough that its author was not so rigid a moralist as some of his admirers have fearlessly asserted, and its spicy tone would charm the unrefined taste of James, to whom it was doubtless read. One example of its easy and not unmusical rhythm will suffice to show its manner, and one quotation will serve to demonstrate the truth of the assertion made more than once in the foregoing pages, that Waller was by no means the only poet who assisted in completing the perfection of the heroic couplet.

“Lastly, I would some meats forbid the sick,
That I in all may be physician like:
Use not on sweet and juicy meats to feed,
Of such, the fulness doth lust's hunger breed.
And stuff'd with such, we any do admire,
When all their beauty lies in our desire.
But wine is more provoking far than meat,
This heats our blood, and on it rage doth set.
This drowns our mind and makes it sense obey,
Love's wing being wet, he cannot fly away.”¹

It is not for a moment contended that these lines have the polish of Waller's best; but they can be matched from most of his longer poems in their defects of rhythm. In any case they have their position in the development of the heroic couplet, and, in spite of prosaic thoughts and rugged rhymes, the poem as a whole is by no means unmusical. The little satire may be called an unpolished anticipation of Pope, and now and then there are traces of a similarity in lilt which points in the direction of literary parentage. No exalted poetical genius is claimed for Overbury; he was perhaps too witty to have drawn inspiration from any Muse save Thalia, and she is the source of pungent verse rather than of pure poetry.

Six years later appeared *Observations on the State of the XVII. Provinces, as they stood Anno 1609*,² which were

¹ *Works*, pp. 218, 219.

² Perhaps the writing of these *Observations* may have caused Overbury's name to be suggested early in 1610 as ambassador to the Netherlands; v. Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I., p. 108.

published with Overbury's name attached to them in 1626. This little book is crammed with wise political and diplomatic notes of the condition of the Netherlands and of some parts of France, written in an easy flowing style with a considerable seasoning of wit which makes them of great use and much interest. But the work cannot with any degree of certainty be ascribed to Overbury, who appears to have been about the Court in the year 1609, and who certainly was knighted in 1608. It will not be necessary here to enter upon the vexed question of authorship, as the *Observations* can of necessity little enhance their compiler's literary glory; they need only be mentioned as commonly ascribed to his facile pen. Under the same category falls that curious little collection of scraps of conversation known as *Crumbs fall'n from King James's Table, Or his Table-Talk. Principally relating to Religion, Embassies, State Policy, etc.* This quaint pennyworth of sweepings from the wit of the Scottish Solomon is said to have been found in a manuscript written by Overbury's own hand; and that such may be the fact is possible, since he was a man of great importance in the Court for several years. But that would not in itself prove their authenticity, as he might have written them by the light of Nature and not by the royal inspiration. At all events, this much may be said about the sayings themselves, that if they really represented the King's speeches, had he been endowed with the courage to pursue the dictates of his own reason, he might have made a less painful exhibition of himself than he actually did throughout Europe and in the eyes of his subjects. Such are the works rightly or wrongly assigned to Overbury, and if they do not reveal a literary genius of the highest order, they give evidence of a more than superficial knowledge of the world, and of a biting wit, occasionally blunted by rare touches of tenderness. They furthermore throw some little light upon his strong and masterful character, which led him to commit those grave indiscretions which finally brought about his premature death.

After this long digression it will be necessary to return to the story of Overbury's life. He found his legal studies little to his taste, and for a time he rose rapidly in favour in the Court, by the help and recommendation of Sir Robert Cecil, the then Lord Treasurer. But on some

grievance, real or fancied, he threw up his chances at Court, and obtained leave to travel in France, where he acquired the last touches of courtly polish. He may possibly have continued his journey into the Netherlands at this time, from which he would return by Flushing. When he actually came back to London is uncertain, but he was sent on a voyage of pleasure to Edinburgh in 1601-2 by his father, where he "met with Sir William Cornwallis, one who knew him in Queen's College at Oxford. Sir Wm. commended him to diverse, and among the rest to Robin Carr, then page to the Earl of Dunbar; so they two came along to England together, and were great friends."¹ The said Carr was a descendant of the Scottish Kerrs, who had been page in 1602-3 to the King; but when James came south, the Council of the late Queen thought it fitter for him to have at least as many running footmen as his predecessor had had before him. The pages were therefore dismissed with the present of a suit of clothes and fifty pounds to find their fortunes as they could. Carr and Overbury came into England together; but the young Scotsman finding himself launched on the world with fifty pounds in his pocket passed over to France, where he spent his money in a vain attempt to seek a fortune, and with a more successful purpose of acquiring the external graces of a French courtier. When he once more returned to England, about the year 1605, he attached himself to Lord Hay, and renewed his intimacy with Overbury, who had also just arrived from abroad.² Carr was endowed with much personal grace of manner and carriage; "his stature was rather well compacted than tall; as to his features and favour, comely rather than beautiful. The hair of his head was flaxen, and that of his face yellow: his nature was gentle, his disposition affable, his affections public, until a particular person engrossed them."³

Such was the man in personal appearance and disposition when he came once more to the notice of the King of Britain, by what proved to be a fortunate accident for himself. In the year 1606 Lord Hay was commissioned

¹ *Works*, p. 30. Dr. Rimbault is here quoting from *Additional MSS.*, No. 15,476 in the British Museum, which contains "Notes taken A.D. 1637 from the mouth of Sir Nicholas Overbury, the father of Sir Thomas."

² *Truth Brought to Light by Time* (1692), Pt. I., pp. 8, 9.

³ Lloyd, *Statesmen of England* (1665), p. 522.

by James to prepare a tilting-match, and admiring the graceful bearing and comely favour of his young countryman, he selected Carr "to carry his device to the King, according to the custom of those times used." But in performing this duty Carr's horse threw him and broke his leg, a circumstance which at once excited the ready sympathy of James. Many people rise in life to fall again; but Carr, as will be seen, owed his rise in life to an opportune fall. The King sent his own physician to attend upon the patient, and on learning that he had once been a royal page, he sent for him, kept him by him until he was recovered, and made him his page once more. From this moment Carr's advancement was certain: from a post in the bedchamber he was promoted to a place at the Council-table, and for several years all the appointments about the Court were virtually at his disposal.¹ He was a man of a merry and cheerful temper, though his intellectual gifts were few in number and limited in capacity. But more or less intellectuality made little difference in James's preferences; it was his persistent habit to be captivated by a well-favoured exterior rather than by a well-furnished brain, and he lavished his somewhat obtrusive affection upon his young favourite. Carr's polished carriage commended itself to his royal master. He could hand a trencher, sit a horse, make a leg, utter a coarse jest and laugh at the royal puns, and little more was needed in a man who would rise to eminence in that shallow and corrupt Court. In addition to his natural advantages, he was born north of the Tweed, a circumstance which always had its influence with so loyal and patriotic a Scotsman as was James. Moreover, the King, who had an absolute though unwarranted confidence in his own kingcraft, took great delight in training young men in the art of government; and when he imagined them to have sufficiently profited by his instructions, he cast the burden of his royal cares entirely upon their shoulders, while he amused himself with his hounds and his theological controversies.

It was at this juncture of affairs that Overbury made his appearance once more at Court, and looking about for a patron, he soon found one to his mind in his former friend, who had been recently made Knight of the Bath. The inexplicable fascination which the favourite exercised

¹ *Truth Brought to Light*, Pt. I., pp. 9, 10.

over the King, coupled with his own easy and ductile disposition, formed the exact combination of qualities which so arbitrary a man as himself desired to find in his patron; and, in spite of the opposition of many powerful friends, he attached himself to the fortunes of Carr.¹ It is just possible that the two friends had met in France during their sojourn abroad; but of this there is no direct evidence, though tradition affords vague hints which point in this direction. But Overbury, who had made up his mind to rise in favour at Court, when he saw his old friend, whom he knew and whom he could mould to his will, in a position of great influence, naturally turned to him for seasonable help. That Carr, for his part, who at the outset of his career had the reputation of being modest, felt the need of an abler man than himself to assist him in those weighty matters of State which were thrust upon him by the King's insane infatuation would seem comparatively certain, from the closeness of the intimacy to which he admitted Overbury. The young scholar was the very man whom the half-fledged statesman needed to enable him to maintain his position in the eyes of the King and the nation without falling into any signal disgrace from which his own wit could not have saved him. Nor can there be any question that the patron traded upon the brains of his secretary until a woman caused their ultimate quarrel. In return for Overbury's real services faithfully rendered, Carr rewarded him for several years with absolute confidence, and he never took any step of importance without first consulting his secretary, whose advice he all but invariably followed.

Of this intimacy but few traces survive in the histories of the time, but the two friends were well matched; Carr commanded the King and Overbury commanded Carr. The imperious Englishman soon exercised a strong man's influence over the easy-tempered and kindly Scotsman, which he was discreet enough to hide until the final rupture. In 1608 Carr induced the King to knight his friend, and at the same time Nicholas Overbury, his father, was made a judge in Wales by the same powerful influence.² Some idea of the relations which subsisted between the two men may be derived from Bacon's har-

¹ Winwood, *Memorials of Affairs of State, etc.*, Vol. III., pp. 478, 479.

² Wood, *Athenæ*, Vol. II., cols. 133, 134.

anguish at the trial of Somerset, which was Carr's final title. "My Lord of Somerset," he says, "exercising at that time, by His Majesty's especial favour and trust, the office of Secretary, did not forbear to acquaint Overbury with the King's despatches from all parts of Spain, France, and the Low Countries; and this then not by glimpses, or now and then rounding in the ear for a favour, but in a settled manner; packets were sent sometimes opened by my Lord, sometimes unbroken, to Overbury, who perused them, made table-talk of them, as they thought good. So I will undertake the time was when Overbury knew more of the secrets of State than the Council-table did; nay, they were grown to such inwardness, as they made a play of all the world besides themselves, so as they had ciphers and jargons for the King and Queen and great men of the realm; things seldom used but either by princes to their confederates, or, at the least, by such as practise and work against, or at least upon, princes."¹ Thus it will be seen that as he rose himself Carr bore up Overbury, his secretary, in whose judgment he reposed unrestrained confidence. But unrestrained confidence has a tendency to beget plainness of speech, and plainness of speech in its turn interrupts even close friendships. There can be little doubt that Overbury used this privilege of confidence with an arrogance which must have been excessively galling even to so easy-tempered a man as Carr. He was naturally of an impatient and overbearing disposition, which loved to carry all before it, and kicked at the slightest opposition. In his later agony he wrote to Carr, passionately complaining that he "owed him more than any soul living, both for his fortune, reputation, and understanding";² and the vaunts of his private letters could hardly be always uttered in private.

During their friendship it must never be imagined that all the virtues were on Overbury's side, and all the vices on Carr's. If the patron was by no means a model of probity, and a man into whose greedy pouch much

¹ *State Trials* (1816), Vol. II., p. 973. With reference to the published accounts of the trials of Overbury's murderers, it must be remembered that they were official accounts, which would tend to soften Somerset's guilt. For a full account of this matter, *v. Amos, The Great Oyer of Poisoning.*

² Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III., p. 478.

ill-gotten wealth found its crooked way, neither was the secretary an angel of light, as his eulogists have represented in their posthumous elegies. Bacon, who was a shrewd judge of character, describes him as "being indeed of an insolent and thrasonical disposition,"¹ and his censure is doubtless true. Whenever the curtain of obscurity is lifted for a moment, Overbury appears as a busy, active man of affairs, able and brilliant, but with the fullest consciousness of his own ability and brilliance, and who was continually making extravagant claims for the recognition of his own surpassing merits. Carr at this time was an easy, though avaricious, man, who was capable of doing great kindnesses to his friends, but who never spared his foes. He was willing enough to take Sherborne Manor from Lady Raleigh, because of a legal flaw in the conveyance by which it was made over to her; but his splendour of living and his smooth address gained him the affections of the people no less than those of the King,² a dual achievement which his more distinguished successor, the Duke of Buckingham, utterly failed to obtain. The intimacy between Carr and Overbury must have been close indeed for the one to have entrusted the other with State secrets of the utmost importance. While they sat together at table they used a jargon, as Bacon calls it, of nicknames, by which they were able to discuss matters of policy and secret circumstances known to themselves alone, without revealing the subjects under consideration to the rest of the company. The King, for example, was called *Julius*, as may be seen from Overbury's own letters, while Archbishop Abbot was at one time denominated *Ductius*, and Sir Henry Neville was styled *Simonist*.³ By means of these and similar nicknames the two friends, who were in possession of diplomatic secrets of the highest danger, were able at all times to communicate with one another in a mode of speech not understood by the King himself.

The hangers-on at Court, who hated Overbury little less than his patron, were forced, in spite of their dislike of the two men, to sue to the one or the other if they wanted place or power, or if they had suits already pending to which they desired a successful issue. That

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 973.

² Lloyd, *Statesmen, etc.*, p. 520.

³ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 981. Cf. Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 478.

Overbury was puffed up by his success was shown by the haughty arrogance of his carriage, which inflamed the wrath of the older statesmen, such as the Howards, almost to a pitch of fury. For the present he was able to snap his fingers at them, and at all his enemies, because he was supported by one who was more influential than all of them taken together. But in 1611 he laid the foundations of his own downfall, rather by an accidental circumstance than by malice aforethought. "He was once before committed for a very short time": that is to say, he suffered imprisonment before his final captivity in 1613. "Upon this occasion, the Queen was looking out of her window, where Somerset and Overbury were walking, and when the Queen saw them, she said, There goes Somerset and his governor. And a little after Overbury did laugh. The Queen, conceiving that he had overheard her, thought that they laughed at her; whereupon she complained, and Overbury was committed. But when it did appear unto the Queen that they did not hear her, and that their laughter did proceed from a jest which the King was pleased to use that day at dinner, then the Queen was well-satisfied, and he was released."¹ That Her Majesty was much angered by Overbury on this occasion appears from a letter which she wrote to Lord Salisbury, and doubtless she kept a close watch upon a man who had become extremely distasteful to her on other grounds. Her influence with James was great in such matters, and he soon learned to hate those whom she hated, like a dutiful husband.²

Just before this episode in Overbury's career, on April 9, 1611,³ Carr was created Viscount Rochester, and it seemed as if he had only to ask for any favour and it would not be denied. James took a great pleasure in his company from his jovial flow of animal spirits, and from his utter ignorance of those accomplishments of learning and divinity in which he fancied himself to shine beyond all other men. The young Viscount's comeliness of person, as well as the recollection of the accident which he had suffered in his attempt to amuse James at the out-

¹ Goodman, *The Court of King James I.* (Edited by J. S. Brewer 1839), Vol. I. pp. 215, 216.

² *Idem*, Vol. II. pp. 143-145.

³ Camden, *Annals of James I.* (*Compleat History of England*, 1706), Vol. II. p. 643.

set of his public life, had their availing influence with the ungainly but affectionate monarch. Carr himself little dreamed that this step in his promotion would prove the downward step to ruin. Courted by those whom he saw around him, the object of interested attention to great ladies, treated with slobbering kindness by the King, and greeted with applause whenever he made his way through the streets of London, he never imagined that there would soon be an end to his glory, nor that he was destined to play his own hateful part in one of the darkest tragedies of English history. As yet he was true to his friend, over whose fortunes he watched with a fostering care, and whose manifold gifts he used to the advantage of both. But his unthinking, cheerful mind could not foresee that circumstances were driving him along a path of gross immorality, which could but lead to one end. The time was fast approaching in which he could not escape from accusation of the heartless murder of that very friend to whom he owed so much of his success in life, and whom he had hitherto helped to the best of his power.

At the beginning of his reign, James, to show his gratitude to the Howards, who had suffered so much for their loyal adherence to his mother's cause, had patched up a wedding between the boy Earl of Essex and Lady Frances Howard, the daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, who was at that time quite a child. Immediately after his union the young Earl pursued his studies for a period, and then set out to travel on the Continent, to complete his education, after the custom of the nobility and gentry of the day. When he returned of a sufficient age to consummate his nuptials, he found that his Countess's affections had been wholly estranged from him and drawn towards the favourite, by whose splendour and influence she was dazzled. One of the most beautiful women of her time, she had been ill-trained by her mother, whose morality was not beyond reproach; and the shameful laxity which James heedlessly tolerated at his Court was a further snare to a young, giddy, and lovely woman. Her great-uncle, Henry Howard, who had long been a Catholic, with more policy than honesty, changed his religion, and was rewarded with the Earldom of Northampton, and the prospect of receiving in addition the Lord Treasurer's staff. A man of singular astuteness, he

soon perceived the overpowering sway which Rochester exercised over the King, and he determined to abandon old differences and to use the favourite's influence to help him in the achievement of his own ambitious purposes. A dark-souled, crafty, and designing man, he had no difficulty in making himself agreeable to Rochester, save the presence and power of Sir Thomas Overbury, who had shown himself no friend to the Howards. It is important to notice this reason for the Earl's hatred, which may serve to explain the part which he took in the ensuing horrors.

When, then, the young Countess of Essex complained to him of her hatred to her husband and her love to Rochester, he showed not the smallest hesitation in profiting by his niece's shame, while he ministered to her gratification. The story of the guilty amours of this pair of Court luminaries is dark and involved in much mystery; the authorities contradict one another in many of the most important details, and it is extremely difficult to blend their varying statements into one harmonious whole. Nor are the details in themselves suitable for publication in full, though they created considerable sensation in their own day. But this much is certain, that the Countess, whose marriage ought to have saved her from the crime, spent much of her time, with the aid of a former maid of hers, who had married and buried Dr. Turner, in trying to bewitch Rochester into a love of her. They consulted Dr. Forman, a venerable quack of considerable ability, who, by images in lead, love-philtres, and similar commonplace means of vulgar imposture, attempted to bring their respective gallants to these ladies.¹ Letters² are extant from the young Countess to Mrs. Turner and to this ancient swindler which state the drift of her affections with an unmistakable plainness. In spite of the constancy and patience of her husband, she strove by all means within her power to alienate him and to draw Rochester to her. Such is not unfrequently the end of a foolish and ill-assorted marriage, even though a King be the match-maker. The Countess could not perceive the sterling qualities of her husband, which lurked beneath his somewhat grave and cold exterior, while the showy accomplishments of Rochester were well calculated to

¹ *Truth Brought to Light*, Pt. I. Chaps. V. and VI.

² *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 931, 932.

captivate her frivolous taste. The wonder is now, and must always be, that Essex was so patient with her infamous conduct, which soon could no longer be disguised from all in the Court.

The share which Sir Thomas Overbury took in the promotion of these amours must always be a matter of great uncertainty. In his own letters from the Tower to his patron, he claims that "he had won her by letters," which he had written, and which were, of course, copied out by Rochester, and sent in his own name.¹ That Overbury, therefore, had written letters with this vicious purpose in view, and that in his best style, appears proved beyond all dispute; but why Rochester and his friend should have taken so much trouble to win a woman who had already surrendered herself in inclination is not a little mysterious. If she was not ready to fall into Rochester's arms, why should she have spent so much time in consulting Dr. Forman; and when he departed from the scene of his trickeries, why should she have had recourse to Dr. Gresham, with the object of bewitching, not only her husband, whom she hated, but the man whom she really loved? Possibly, under the instigation of her mother, she had angled for Prince Henry, and failing to snare him, she had devoted her vicious endeavours to Rochester. The latter, seeing her attentions to the Prince, may have been spurred on by Overbury to supplant him, and he could never have known how deeply her heart was engaged to him when he employed his secretary to compose the all-conquering letters. It is further probable that she would not, being a cunning, if not a good woman, throw herself at the head of the man whom she wished to win; while the letters themselves could not fail to delight a woman already won. Whatever may be the truth of this vexed question, and little more than a balance of probabilities can be attained, Overbury's morality throughout the whole matter shows itself in the most unfavourable light.

The case itself was the vilest and most despicable kind of seduction, by playing upon the feelings of a vain and high-spirited woman, who, unconsulted, had been forced into a marriage which, when she was capable of understanding its obligations, was hateful to her. To be then a Leporello to such a Don Giovanni was a part

¹ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 479.

utterly beneath a man of Overbury's pretensions to character and common honesty. He little dreamed that, in obliging his patron, or perhaps in instigating him to such a crime, he was laying a rod for his own back, which, sooner or later, was sure to make him smart. The whole story, as it is told in the contemporary histories, shows how well he understood the King's love of an intrigue between two of his courtiers. James, who had a coarse palate, was always tickled by such a story as this seduction would afford, and he chuckled to himself over the vices of those whom he ought to have censured with all the force at his command. But Overbury had failed to calculate one important element in the success of his scheme: he did not realize the overmastering influence which the beauty of the Countess was certain to exercise upon the man of her choice, and he never imagined for a moment that Rochester would think of marriage with a woman who showed herself not unwilling to be his mistress. He was ready enough to see the Countess of Essex the concealed, or even the openly acknowledged, mistress of his patron; but he desired no partner in Rochester's affections so intimate as a wife.¹ Moreover, when that wife was one of the hated Howards, his disinclination was at once doubled; nay, he may have meant the whole intrigue to have been a fatal wound to their honour. For the present he felt himself secured from so unpleasant a contingency by the fact that the Earl and Countess of Essex were fast bound by the ties of wedlock, and that, as a natural consequence, there could be no legal marriage between the frolicsome lady and his infatuated patron; and he continued to condone Rochester's infamous immorality and to act as a go-between to the pair of unrighteous lovers.

But his dream of confidence was rudely broken by the news that the Countess was seeking a divorce from her husband on the hateful charge of impotence, which may or may not be true. Overbury at once perceived that he had spun a noose for his own neck, and he was filled with the greatest alarm for his future influence, to say nothing of his future safety. He could still count, as he thought, on the friendship of Rochester, whom he had served so faithfully, and who had trusted him so absolutely. But he did not recognise the overpowering influence which a

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 974.

woman of great beauty and of a vivacious disposition can exercise over the man to whom she has given herself. He trusted to the ties of friendship, which are but as blazing flax beneath the breath of love. He had been wont to speak always with the greatest freedom to his patron, and now he began to try to dissuade him from union with one who had shown herself to be light-minded in the worst sense of the word. Nay, at one period of the amour Rochester and he had been wont to jest at the expense of the Countess, and to speak their minds freely to the prejudice of her character, than which there can be no more contemptible conduct on the part of man. Hence, he imagined that he could continue to adopt the same tone with safety; in which he was utterly mistaken. The woman's influence increased with every hour, while his diminished almost with every moment. He was conscious, too, that he possessed many important State secrets in common with his patron, which would make it extremely unsafe for the latter to refuse to follow his advice. Besides, he was a man who was ready to employ any device, however questionable, to secure the object of his own wishes; and his confidence sharpened the tone of his remonstrances, which increased in bitterness and frequency. He fancied that Rochester could not maintain his position without his secretary's aid; knowing with fatal certainty that his patron was a man of inferior parts, he trusted to his own intellectual superiority to retain his influence, and his confidence was misplaced, and ruin overtook him by the way. He had not reckoned with the vindictive spite of an enraged and outraged woman, and he had reckoned without his host, as he found to his cost.

Meanwhile, the preparations for the divorce went smoothly on, in spite of Overbury's private remonstrances and the resolute opposition of Archbishop Abbot.¹ The King had taken the matter in hand, both out of favour to Rochester and possibly to repair the wrong which he had unintentionally done by the foolish marriage of which he had been the principal contriver. It is not impossible, too, that James's unaffected kindness of heart made him pity the young Countess, whom he had injured in his attempt at peace-making between two rival families; and there can be little doubt that he had persuaded him-

¹ *Vide supra*, pp. 240-248.

self of the truth of the charge against the Earl of Essex. But neither his patron's wishes nor the King's desire had any weight with Overbury, who would either be all in all with Rochester or nothing; and though he would soon enough have been nothing if he had favoured the marriage, he did not choose to be nothing at the bidding of a woman, but only upon his own terms, and by his own consent. He made up his mind to play the unwelcome part of the wise and moral monitor, though he had defiled himself to some purpose with the pitch which he had wantonly handled. When the confidant of an intrigue holds up his hands in pious horror at the natural consequences of his own mediatorial efforts, the spectacle is edifying rather than impressive. Yet he is credited with having spoken thus on one occasion to Rochester: "Sir, howsoever other things may pass either with small regard or be smothered with honour and greatness, yet such things as lay a man open to public and eminent contempt can hardly be obscured in a person public and eminent (as your lordship is), which things are often to be esteemed in a man that outwardly seemeth light and effeminate, or inwardly wanteth the balance of government to poise external actions. Of a truth, sir (be it spoken without offence) the Court calls your modesty into question, and fears that those honours that should be hereditary to noble persons will be obscured with eminent evils, and blemished with levity and inconstancy."¹

That the foregoing remonstrance was far gentler than any which Overbury would have been likely to have uttered is plainly shown by the tone of his later objurgations. But he may have begun by gentler rebukes before he proceeded to call the Countess what she really was, but what she hated to hear herself called. Indeed, throughout the little work entitled *Truth Brought to Light by Time* he is represented as a man of a high moral tone of character, who protested against the proceedings of Rochester for Rochester's sake alone. At first the Viscount would seem to have listened without animosity to his secretary's persistent reproaches, which only grew in intensity in proportion as they were disregarded. But, like most lovers, he told them to the woman whom they chiefly concerned, and she in her turn learned to hate Overbury with all the fury of a justly reproached woman. There can be little

¹ *Truth Brought to Light*, Pt. I. pp. 29, 30.

doubt that the moment she heard of his dissuasive insults to her tarnished honour she resolved to compass his death. But seeing the strong hold which he had justly acquired over her lover, she tried to induce Rochester to cast off his plain-spoken friend with smooth but disdainful entreaties. "It was not possible," she complained, "that she should endure those injuries, or hope for any prosperity so long as he lived. That she wondered how he could be so familiar, so much affected to his man Overbury, that he, without him, could do nothing, as it were, making him his right hand, seeing he being newly grown into the King's favour, and depending wholly upon his greatness, must expect to be clouded, if not ruined, when his servant, that knew his secrets, should come to preferment."¹ Whether the guilty Countess used these very words or not matters little; whatever she may have said, it is manifest that she must have pleaded with her lover in similar if not stronger terms, and her resolute will was determined to bring about the speedy ruin of Overbury.

Nor was that luckless gentleman backward in playing into her hands; his native self-confidence, not to say arrogance of carriage, had brought him into great disfavour with the King, who only suffered him for the sake of Rochester. Nor could he perceive how intimately the love of his mistress had entwined itself around his patron's heart; he thought he knew his man, but he certainly failed, like many another man, to read the resolutions and plans of the woman whom he had so deeply offended. On every possible occasion he abused her to Rochester, who did not hesitate to basely repeat to her every word which had been spoken in confidence, whereby he inflamed her fury almost to madness. Of course Overbury knew nothing of his patron's cowardly treachery to him; nay, with more innocence than he generally showed in matters pertaining to his own interest, he was not even afflicted with any suspicions. So he continued to utter remonstrance after remonstrance, and threat upon threat, until Rochester grew weary of the vigorous candour of his outspoken friend. Perhaps² he had begun to feel for some time that

¹ Winstanley, *England's Worthies*, p. 287.

² *Aulicus Coquinariæ, Secret History of James I.*, Vol. II. pp. 220, 221. "And therefore it was *his own seeking* as best fitting his excellent parts to present the King's person in embassy to France, which to my knowledge he accepted, and seemed prepared to advance.

"Conceiting, perhaps, that the power which he usurped over Somer-

the yoke of his able but arbitrary secretary was becoming unbearable to him, and the resolution was gradually shaping itself in his cautious mind of standing by himself in the future, if only he could find a fitting opportunity of getting rid of him without attracting too great attention to their separation. The Viscount was not a man of much perception, but he was able to see what an ill look the sudden interruption of so close an intimacy would have in the eyes of every one who haunted the Court, and that the proper cause of the separation would be at once assigned, unless it came about with some appearance of accident.

But if Rochester actually hated his former friend, he was able to dissemble his growing repulsion with so admirable a subtlety that it entirely escaped the scrutiny of Overbury, who was keen-sighted enough in some directions, but who for this once was as blind as his conduct was fatuous. Such a term would not be applied to it had his dissuasion been based upon the high motives of a pure-minded man, instead of upon the lowest ground of self-interest. But fatuous his conduct was, even from his own point of view, had he not been besotted with a confidence in his indispensable importance to his patron. Once at least his language rose to a pitch of abusive impertinence, which finally alienated Rochester's affections from him. H. Payton, one of his servants, overheard a dialogue between the two friends, while they were in a private gallery at Whitehall, and while he himself was in an adjoining room. Rochester coming late to his chamber met Overbury, to whom he said, "How now, are you up yet?" To which Overbury answered with fierce anger: "Nay, what do you here at this time of night? Will you never leave the company of that base woman? And seeing that you do so neglect my advice, I desire that to-morrow morning we may part; and that you will let me have that portion you know is due to me; and then I

set, and the interests of either's affection (which Overbury knew best how to master) could not endure the absence without much regret, which, accordingly had for some time true effects, as Overbury intended.

"But when Somerset had wisely considered that there would be *no great loss of so loose a friend, then Overbury would not go*; no, though I know his instructions were drawn." If Sanderson is the author of this tract he is not to be trusted. It was intended as a reply to Weldon's *Court and Character of King James*. Its title is due to the fact that Weldon was son of Elizabeth's clerk of the kitchen.

will leave you free to yourself, to stand on your own legs.”¹ A speech so insolent both betrays the disposition of Overbury and was not likely to receive a temperate reply. Rochester answered with much indignation, “My legs are straight enough and strong enough to bear myself.” Such a dispute was ill-calculated to serve Overbury’s interests, or to cement his friendship with his patron, and it is not wonderful that they parted in mutual wrath: the secretary was filled with rage and disappointment at the neglect of all his warnings, while the Viscount was offended with the severity of his reproach.

Advice given in fierce terms like the foregoing defeats its own ends, and Overbury’s excessive arrogance appears very manifest in his conviction that Rochester could not stand in the King’s favour without his help and service. But the patron registered the insult in his mind, and by repeating the speech to the Countess he intensified her bitter animosity. Both of the lovers knew that Overbury was one powerful hindrance to their marriage; he knew much concerning Rochester that would have an ugly look if it were brought to light, and he held the threat of betrayal over his patron’s head. It is not, therefore, surprising that they determined to get rid of him by some means, fair or foul. The Countess, as the one whose credit suffered most from Overbury’s accusations, took the first step to remove the obstacle to her marriage from her path, and she strove to make interest with Sir David Wood, or Woods, to murder him. The said Wood had had a suit, which would have brought him in £2,200, but being crossed by the Viscount and his secretary, it was only settled on payment of £1,200 to the former. Hearing that Overbury had done the legal part of the business, Wood had sent him a challenge, which the secretary was too wise to accept. Whereupon the disappointed suitor threatened his adversary with a good caning, if he could lay hands upon him. Such were the reasons which induced the Countess to send for Wood, who, however, refused to risk his neck on the word of a woman, even though she promised him safety and £1,000 reward. She sent for him a second time, having her paramour concealed in a chamber near her; but Wood, not being able to gain the necessary security from the Viscount himself, once more refused to have anything to do with the

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 978.

matter.¹ That the Countess was bitterly disappointed in her man is obvious ; but he was too wise to run the risk of suffering all the penalty, while she reaped all the benefit of the murder.

It may be urged that this piece of evidence pleads in favour of Carr's innocence of the actual murder of his former friend. But all that can fairly be deduced from it is that he refused a dangerous though direct means of ridding himself of one whom he had grown to hate. Nor can it be reasonably maintained that she kept her lover in ignorance, when she set about her evil design of poisoning the obnoxious secretary, during the whole of its long course : she may have concealed the inception, but she could not have hidden the progress of the conspiracy. Moreover, it must be admitted that Rochester, though not a man of commanding talents, had wit enough to perceive that murder of the kind which she desired was certain to be ultimately traced home to its originator ; whereas he might not unnaturally expect to be able to conceal murder by poison, if he worked with sufficient skill and used proper instruments. As the sequel shows, he did gain his anticipation, and remained in safety and affluence for about two years. Nay, just when all probability of detection seemed to have vanished, it was only a most unforeseen train of events which revealed his guilt and hers, who was the cause of the guilt of both. It may here be remarked, that the evidence cited in these pages has been for the most part taken from the authorized version of the Trial, which would naturally soften Rochester's share of the guilt ; if, therefore, he can be proved to have been consciously implicated in the subsequent crime on such evidence as this, the probability of his actual criminality is at least strengthened.

Failing in her nobler design of cutting Overbury's throat, the Countess did not cease to urge her lover against him ; but for some time a convenient opportunity did not present itself to carry out her infamous desires. The destined victim was still walking about the Court in his wonted arrogant fashion, vainly imagining that his reproofs had gone home, and that his patron was still his attached friend. That he was living in a fool's Paradise was soon to appear ; but he had often quarrelled with his patron in former times, and he thought that his last dis-

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 925.

pute was but like one of the past differences already healed. Whatever may be Rochester's share of the guilt of the ensuing tragedy, nothing can palliate the heartless dissimulation which he practised upon his unsuspecting friend. By his own arrogant folly, too, Overbury greatly assisted his enemies in their evil designs: somewhere about this time he once more insulted the Queen, and thus provoked her own and her husband's anger, in consequence of which Rochester strove to persuade him to retire from the Court for a short time.¹ But Overbury saw one of two things involved in this advice. If he were left to himself, Rochester would certainly marry the Countess, as soon as she was set free by divorce, and at the same time he would interrupt a promising career of advancement for himself. He remained, therefore, at his post, continuing his remonstrances to his friend and showering his insults upon his friend's mistress. The proceedings for the divorce were being hurried forward, and Overbury knew quite enough of the guilty conduct of the two lovers to overthrow the arrangements altogether. Thus, if the marriage were to be consummated at all, it was necessary at least to remove him to some distance, until the divorce had been finally obtained. That such a mild course of procedure would content the bitter and undying hatred of the Countess against the victim of her wrath, whose plain and truthful description of her conduct had worked her to a frenzy, was not to be expected, and it is doubtful whether she had any share in the device which was used to remove him from the course of true but discreditable love.

Whether Rochester at first intended to rid himself of his former friend by the sure means of death may, perhaps, be doubted; but his own design shows a subtlety hardly to be expected from a man of his nature, and which was certainly worthy of a better cause. Possibly the plan was Northampton's, who throughout the whole of the proceedings had shown himself a cunning and treacherous man, who was untormented by any scruples, or by any care for his niece's reputation. The accounts of the occurrence which led to his imprisonment are various; but the majority of them lay the blame on Overbury himself. On April 21, 1613, urged by his favourite's solicitations, James sent the Lord Chancellor Ellesmere

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 920.

and the Earl of Pembroke “to speak with Sir Thomas Overbury, and to make him an offer of an embassy to the Low Countries or France, which he would. Whereto he made this answer, that *he was not capable of such employment from want of the language, nor able to undergo it by reason of his weakness, being so exceedingly troubled with the spleen that if he had a long letter to write he was fain to give over.*” He was said in his hot-headed foolishness to have further added, that though this might seem to be a desirable piece of preferment, it was merely a means of breaking the thread of his fortune, and that a King could not compel a free gentleman to leave his country against his will.¹ Others give the place of the suggested embassy as Muscovy, with which distant realm James was at that time meditating certain arrangements of trade, which would open an eastern route through its expanse.² As soon as Overbury’s refusal was heard, the Court was put into a mighty pucker, and the King was especially enraged by the report which reached him of the insolent language which had been used by one whom he had intended to favour. The result was that Overbury was sent prisoner to the Tower for contempt of the King’s wishes.³ That he relied upon somebody to bear him out with the angry James is quite certain; and there can be no doubt but that he was trusting to his patron. Before he was actually sent to prison, Sir Dudley Digges was sent by the aforesaid Lords to receive his final reply, which was couched in the following significant words, which can but refer to Rochester:—“My precious chief knows the King’s mind better than any, and I the mind of my precious chief.”⁴ It is, therefore, manifest that Overbury’s patron had talked with him more than once about the suggested embassy, and dissuaded him from undertaking it, on the promise of supporting him during the King’s anger.⁵

¹ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 447.

² *Idem ibidem*, p. 453; *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 982.

³ Winwood, Vol. III. pp. 440, 448.; Wotton, *Reliquiæ* (1672), p. 448.

⁴ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 920.

⁵ *Aulicus Coquinariæ* (Ed. Sir Walter Scott, 1811), Vol. II. p. 221, remarks, “And this was a just and true ground for the King and Council to punish so great insolency with imprisonment in the Tower, *which Somerset heartily endeavoured in due time to release.*” That Somerset made no such endeavours is evident from the course of events and from the evidence of his trial itself. That he pretended to Overbury that he

The evidence given in the law-courts is conclusive upon this important point; moreover, the unlucky victim of a great man's treachery, in a letter written a few days before his death, utters the following passionate reproaches: "Thereupon you made your vow that I should live in the Court, was my friend, and (swore) many oaths which are now fulfilled; *stayed me here when I would have been gone, and sent for me twice that day that I was caught in the trap.*"¹ Who can doubt, in the face of a letter such as this, that Rochester, so far from supporting Overbury in his refusal, represented his conduct in the most odious light to the credulous King, with the sole object of at least keeping his secretary in prison until he had consummated his marriage? What the unworthy Viscount confessed, and what the majority of the authorities confirms, is not to be lightly set aside on the word of a compiler like the author of *Aulicus Coquinaricæ*, who may be Heylin, or who may be William Sanderson. A more despicable plot against a former friend, and one to whom he was greatly indebted for his success in life, could hardly have been devised by Rochester and his infamous allies; but bad as it was in itself, it would have been well if it had ended here, as the Viscount pretended at a later period was his intention. The meanness of the treachery, and the continual dissimulation which was needed to make his conduct have a plausible appearance to the victim of his displeasure, go far in themselves to prove his complicity in the terrible crime which the Countess committed. When, too, we know that on the eve of his trial he falsified some of the evidence which might have incriminated him, and caused a box of documents to be broken open which had been actually sealed by order of the Court which was to try him, we cannot lightly acquit him on purely presumptive evidence, or even on his own resolute denial of his guilt.²

It may with some force be urged that we are compelled to rely on presumptive evidence on both sides of this difficult question; and that is no doubt the case. But when there are two kinds of presumptive evidence, the

had made and was making such endeavours is likely enough, but is not quite the same thing. Our author is vainly trying to invalidate the testimony of Sir Anthony Weldon, and he is compelled to have recourse to misrepresentation to prove his point.

¹ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 479.

² *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 991, 992.

one based alike on the motives and the facts of the crime, and the other on some of the facts only, it is natural to esteem the former as the more valuable and the more reliable of the two. Be that as it may, Overbury was now safely lodged in the Tower on the twenty-second of April, 1613, and Rochester's conduct throughout his imprisonment to its fatal close, and indeed after that awful event, can only be stigmatised as callous in the extreme. In the first place, the captive was closely imprisoned and kept from all communication with his friends.¹ This is in itself a suspicious circumstance, and one which needs explaining away before the Viscount can be acquitted of more sinister intentions than merely keeping his friend "laid up in lavender," for fear lest his too ready tongue should make some unseasonable revelation, and so overthrow any reasonable prospect of the granting of the divorce.

But the device grew darker as the time wore on. Sir William Wade, or more properly Waad, the Lieutenant of the Tower, was removed from his office upon some trivial and baseless charge. It was alleged either that he had dealt too harshly with the Lady Arabella Stuart, who was then in prison for treason, or that he had given her a key by means of which she could easily have escaped from her confinement. The very opposite nature of these accusations goes far to prove their insufficiency, and Waad's removal from a post which he had at all events discharged with discretion was only part of a plot, whose horrible details were exposed two years later. On May 6, 1613, Sir Gervas Helwys, who had to pay a handsome sum for his promotion, was raised to the vacant Lieutenancy.² That he was privy to the design, in which he was expected to play a principal part from the outset, is in itself improbable; but those who exercised their influence in his interest needed a man upon whose compliance they could rely for the completion of their vile machinations. That he was a man of insufficient strength of mind to reveal what he actually knew at a later time, and so to prevent the commission of the crime, is plainly proved by the course of his trial. Despite the money

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II., p. 922.

² Wilson, *James I.* (Kennet, 1706, Vol. II.), p. 692. *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 975, 983. Camden, *Annals of James I.* (Kennet, Vol. II.), *sub* 1613. Wotton, *Reliquiæ* (1672), pp. 412-414.

which he had paid for his office, he was too dependent upon Rochester and Northampton to choose disgrace rather than connivance in a heartless and singularly offensive murder, and he contented himself with a base acquiescence in the attacks upon the prisoner, who had been entrusted to his care and for whose safety he was accountable. A poorer defence than he made, when he was actually tried, cannot easily be imagined; but a drowning man will catch at any straws, and a man who is being tried for his life will put forth any plea, however unsatisfactory it may be.

All the time during which his enemies were striving to compass his destruction with safety to themselves, Overbury continued to write pathetic and angry letters to his patron, praying him to set about his release, while that very patron was soothing his ear with glib promises and delaying a friendly office which he could have done in a single day. Rochester himself was occupied with the sweet service of his mistress, and though he may have been afflicted with occasional twinges of remorse, there can be no reasonable doubt that the disreputable Countess was whetting his anger against his friend. A more cruel and dastardly course of conduct could hardly have been imagined; but there was worse yet to follow. The Countess had determined that Overbury should come out of his prison alive no more; he had insulted her in the most tender point of her honour, if so courteous a term can be fitly used of her tarnished reputation, and she was resolved to take a full and fiendish revenge. In that evil day, when poisoning was so frequent that Prince Henry¹ was generally supposed to have been cut off by this means with the knowledge of his father, it occurred to her corrupt mind that a slow poison, which from its tardy action might easily escape detection, was the surest means of silencing for ever the too tripping tongue of her truthful traducer. Whether she took her lover into her counsels at the beginning of her design, or whether she let him into the secret during the process of the poisoning, may be a matter of dispute; but she must have used his influence, as well as that of the Earl of Northampton, to get Overbury's keeper changed, in order that an instrument of her own might be substituted in his place. Nor is it either probable, or even within the bounds of reason-

¹ *Truth Brought to Light*, Pt. I. chap. xv.

able possibility, that she could keep so dangerous yet so important a secret from him. The two must have spoken together about Overbury, and congratulated themselves that one obstacle to their illicit passion and to their final union was removed from their path. Indeed, the bare probabilities of the case, if they were entirely unsupported by evidence, or by contemporary talk, point only in the one direction of Rochester's ultimate complicity in the murder of his once trusted friend.

It seems certain that the Viscount knew of this change of Overbury's private keeper, even if he was not the actual instrument by which it was achieved. It is true that Sir Thomas Monson,¹ the keeper of the Royal Armoury, was the chosen sponsor of the new under-keeper to the Lieutenant. But by his own unaided efforts he could not have effected a change in so important an office as that of keeper to a political prisoner; the support of a higher authority than his was needed for any such transference. In this fashion, therefore, the train was laid, and a fitting instrument only was required to fire the slow match, or, in less metaphorical language, to make away with the destined victim of a great nobleman's lust and a great lady's dishonour. It was but natural that the Countess should fly for aid to her old companion in infamy, Mrs. Turner, and the guilty procuress became guilty of murder. That sagacious woman, who was uncontaminated by any admixture of high principle with her character, and who had, moreover, a private grudge against Overbury for his plain condemnation of her infamy, was quite ready to bear her share of the nefarious plot. She was immediately prepared with a tool of the requisite type in the person of Richard Weston, an old servant of her husband, a man as free from any taint of scruple as she was herself. Weston received the post of keeper with the full knowledge of the Earl of Northampton, upon the distinct understanding that he should do as he was bidden by the Countess. In return for his services she promised to make him a pursuivant in her train, and to give him a fixed sum of money. When Rochester was afterwards charged with conniving at this appointment and with knowing Weston, he prevaricated so much that his statement of ignorance cannot be received as intrinsically probable, when un-

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 983.

supported by strong rebutting evidence. So the jury judged who were appointed to try him, and it seems hardly possible that they came to a wrong decision.

Weston, in his turn, was not long in finding a man fitted for his purpose, from whom he could with ease and safety purchase several kinds of poison. The man whom he selected was an unscrupulous apothecary, James Franklin by name, "a swarthy, sallow, crooked-back fellow, who was to be the fountain whence these bitter waters came."¹ The drugs used were seven in number, all of which were procured by Weston from Franklin—namely, one called rosalgar, white arsenic, mercury sublimate, cantharides, red mercury, powder of diamonds, and one other unspecified.² Franklin's character is clearly shown by a conference which he held with one of his relatives named Mercer, to whom he boasted, "I have a great friend of my Lady of Essex; she allows me 2s. 6d. a day for my boat-hire, and 10s. a week for my diet. I could have any money I would." His kinsman answered, "But, cousin, how can God bless you in this business?" Whereupon Franklin replied with a blasphemous effrontery, "Let them talk of God that have to do with Him, *my Lord of Somerset* and the Countess will bear me out in anything I do; if you have any suit, wherein you may do yourself any good, and I may gain by it, I will warrant you I will get it."³ Of course, this vaunt of Franklin may be untrue; but it came out in the course of Mercer's examination, and cannot be lightly passed over as the testimony of a lying scoundrel. In any case it at least deserves as much credence as the word of a man who deliberately falsified incriminating documents to save his life, as did Rochester. The conversation took place after the murder, but before the marriage of the chief conspirator; as Rochester did not become Earl of Somerset until November 4, 1613,⁴ and his lady is still styled the Countess of Essex. It merits careful attention from the incrimination of the Viscount, who would not have borne out such a man as Franklin had he not been to a certain extent in his power.

Having thus described the preliminaries of the crime,

¹ Wilson, *James I.* (Kennet, Vol. II.), p. 693.

² Winstanley, *Worthies*, p. 289.

³ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 933, 934.

⁴ Camden, *Annals of James I.* (Kennet, Vol. II.), *sub anno* 1613.

it becomes necessary to set forth in order, as exactly as can be achieved, the details of its lingering progress. Weston at first plied Overbury with less active poisons alone, but succeeded in doing no more than to make the victim grievously sick, but without producing the desired result of a protracted death. On the ninth of May¹ he appears to have administered the first dose of rosalgar, a poison "of a green and yellow colour," which he mingled freely with some white broth, which was to be served with his own hand to Overbury. The result of this endeavour was to produce excessive pain; but the prisoner's strong constitution and the smallness of the dose enabled him to cast off the poison in various filthy issues, which appeared on his body. The more he felt these unusual pains coming over him, the more earnestly did the unhappy captive beseech Rochester to procure his release. But the Viscount procrastinated and put him off with fair answers, and would suffer none of his relations to see him, circumstances which in themselves have so ill a look that they point directly to an ulterior design. It seems wonderful that so shrewd a man as Overbury should as yet have had no suspicions of his patron, and Rochester must have dissembled well to keep his secretary's confidence unshaken. "Sir," wrote the prisoner in touching words of bitter agony, "I wonder that you have not yet found means to effect my delivery; but I remember you said you would be even with me, and so indeed you are; but assure yourself, my lord, if you do not release me, but suffer me thus to die, my blood will be required at your hands."² The prophetic ring of these words is in itself striking, and neither the actor nor the victim dreamed how soon they would be fulfilled to the letter. They breathe forth the agony of intense suffering undeservedly afflicted by a false friend and his infamous accomplices.

When the foregoing letter was written does not appear, but it must have been after the sixth of May, when the Lieutenant first became acquainted with the details of the plot.³ Weston would seem not to have administered the poison on that day, if the somewhat confused and certainly confusing accounts of his trial are to be trusted. The words of the old report run thus: "Weston having

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 913, etc. Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 481.

² *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 918.

³ *Idem, ibidem*, p. 917.

received that poison (the rosalgar sent him by his son from Mrs. Turner), the aforesaid 6th of May, at night bringing Sir Thomas Overbury's supper in one hand, and the vial of poison in the other, meets with the Lieutenant, and asks him in these terms, '*Sir, shall I give it him now?*' Upon this word *now* the Lord Chief Justice demurs, to aggravate the maliciousness; affirming that this particle *now* showed a resolution to poison him. '*What shall you give him?*' replies the Lieutenant. Weston replies, '*As if you did not know, sir.*'"¹ From the account of his confession, which naturally makes things put on their best face in his interest, it seems not only possible but probable that Helwys really did not at this time know why he had been instructed to keep Overbury so close a prisoner. He had received his instructions, and he simply and exactly obeyed them. At all events, he urged, in his own defence, his ignorance of the plot in the following striking words: "But further, when Weston had told me that it was poison which he meant to give, I reprov'd and beat him down with God's judgment; nay, I humbled him so, that upon his knees he thanked God and me, and told me that he and his had cause to bless God for me, for that I withheld him from doing that act."² Either the Lieutenant was speaking the truth, or he must have been a most accomplished hypocrite, if he could utter such words with a full knowledge of the conspiracy. But the fact that they are taken from his confession, when no hope of life was any longer before his eyes, goes far to guarantee their truth, and it may be taken as almost certain that he was really ignorant of the purposes of the Countess and her accomplices when he purchased his office by money and influence.

Weston might have been humbled for the nonce; but his afflicted conscience was soon healed, in spite of the Lieutenant's rebuke. For three days he made no further efforts to poison his victim, but during the third evening he administered a dose of the deadly drug. The conduct of Helwys, when the design had come to his knowledge, was utterly indefensible. He might be dependent upon the goodwill of Rochester and Northampton, who could have put him out of his post at a moment's notice, even though he had paid a handsome sum for it; but the prisoner was entrusted to him to be kept in safety, until

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 917.

² *Idem, ibidem*, p. 938.

such time as the King should relent, or cause him to be brought to trial. His connivance, therefore, in the evil design which Weston was gradually working out was inexcusable; he might not be the actual murderer, but he was at least accessory to its accomplishment. From this time the guilty Countess had a hank over him, which she was quite ready to draw tight if he refused to play the part of silence and non-interruption which was required of him. That he went further than connivance cannot be shown; but this was enough to cost him his life, and justly, when the murder came to light two years later in all its repulsive details. That he had some kind of understanding with the Earl of Northampton cannot be questioned, though in what it consisted will in all probability never be exactly known. But this much is certain, that Northampton wrote at least two letters to Rochester, in which he asserts that he had spent two hours of one day in showing the Lieutenant the need of caution, and in which he goes on to commend the discretion of that astute officer,¹ who knew well enough that if he offended his influential patron he was doomed to disgrace, if not to ruin.

These letters clearly show that there was a distinct understanding between the Earl and the Viscount concerning something which very nearly affected Overbury. What the purport of this understanding may have been is conjecturable, but not absolutely demonstrable; but it is extremely probable that Northampton was privy to his niece's plot. He hated Overbury as the pronounced enemy of his house, and as the outspoken accuser of the Countess of Essex, and he knew that the prisoner was the chief and most dangerous obstacle to the divorce, by which alone her spotted reputation could be in any way cleared by marriage; but he died, opportunely for himself, before he could be brought to trial. If, then, he meant nothing more than the keeping of the captive in close restraint, when he spent two hours with Helwys, why did he insist so much upon the need of caution? So, too, if this were his only motive at the time in question, why did he strive to account for Overbury's death by spreading disgusting reports about the prisoner's immorality, when that prisoner was cut off from all possibility of replying to his base and unworthy insinuations?² That he did mean

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 935, 936.

² Winstanley, *Worthies*, p. 290.

something more than close imprisonment is all but certain; and if this was his meaning, the next question, which calls for a plain answer, is, did Rochester so understand him? Possibly not at this period of the machinations, though the Viscount's word is no more reliable than that of the apothecary Franklin; nay, it seems next to impossible that his mistress should have kept her intentions entirely to herself when she was continually seeing her gallant in relations of the closest intimacy. About this time, or a few days afterwards, seeing that Overbury was daily languishing under the combined effects of deadly poison and close confinement, Weston grew clamorous for his reward from Mrs. Turner, who answered, "The man is not dead yet; perfect your work, and you shall have your hire." For what he did Weston received in all ¹ £180, a sum which seems too large for the Countess to have found without the aid of her lover: a circumstance which points to Rochester's partial, if not complete, complicity in the proceedings.²

On the ninth of June he himself sent a packet containing a white powder to his former secretary, as he alleged, at the prisoner's request, which he said would make him grievously sick, but would afterwards do him good. On this packet turns a great part of the weight of the evidence for or against Rochester. If, as the Court undoubtedly believed, it contained white arsenic, he cannot be acquitted of having, not merely abetted, but of having striven to compass Overbury's death.³ Here again there is only a balance of probabilities to guide our judgment; but the balance does not incline in a favourable direction to the Viscount. He himself asserted that the packet contained nothing but a vomit, which he had sent by the prisoner's request, and which had been prepared by Sir Richard Killigrew.⁴ Killigrew⁵ admitted that he had supplied Rochester with three, and three only, of such emetics, one of which, as George Rawlins, Overbury's kinsman, who had by him been promoted to a place in the bedchamber under Rochester, resolutely affirms, was "laid upon the tester of a bed and lost; and that then he got another, which my lord sent to Sir Thomas Overbury by him; and afterwards a third, which my lord took at Buly;

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 917, 921.

³ *Idem, ibidem*, p. 987.

⁵ *Idem, ibidem*, p. 994.

² *Idem, ibidem*, p. 917.

⁴ *Idem, ibidem*, p. 987.

but he never heard that Sir T. Overbury desired my lord to send him any.”¹ That the packet in question could only have been the second of these is undeniable; that it was any of them is more than doubtful. Franklin may or may not be a reliable witness, and that he contradicted himself more than once must be admitted; but when a man has the halter round his neck, and his only means of escape consists in telling the truth, he does not commonly indulge in wanton lying. He asserts that he supplied a white powder, “which was poison, for my lady called it arsenic, which, as my lady did afterwards tell him, was sent to Sir T. Overbury in a letter.”² Now the only recorded powder sent in a letter directly to the prisoner is the one sent by Rochester’s own hand. If, then, it was merely an emetic, why should it have quite another effect combined with vomiting upon the patient? Nor can Franklin’s testimony on oath be passed over simply on the ground that “he was not a fit witness”; he was a scoundrel, but even a scoundrel commonly tells the truth when he is situated as was Franklin. Moreover, this despicable apothecary could not hope to gain anything by lightly accusing the King’s favourite, though as a matter of fact James was anxious to shake himself free from his imperious minister at this time. But the King’s weariness could not be known to Franklin, and it is probable that if he had chosen to lie in this case, he would have striven to clear Rochester, and so to gain, as he might reasonably have hoped, royal favour himself.

The balance, therefore, of probabilities seems on the whole to incline distinctly if not certainly against the innocence of the Viscount. Furthermore, there was a motive, which cannot be overlooked in a case like the one under consideration, and which would influence him to attempt to rid himself of his troublesome secretary. Overbury did not confine himself to complaints and advice—he violently abused and threatened his patron. It was not that he as yet distrusted him, or dreamed that he might be murdered by his means; he only thought that Rochester had not used his great influence with James to serve him in his hour of need.³ Now Rochester was fully conscious that he was implicated in more than one dark transaction of which his secretary was fully aware; hence

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 994, 995.

² *Idem, ibidem*, p. 995.

³ *Idem, ibidem*, pp. 983, 985.

he would not unnaturally be afraid that Overbury would proceed from threats to revelations, which could not fail to seriously affect his position and influence. He had, then, a strong motive to get rid of his follower by the only means which would silence him effectually. Besides, if he only wished to remove him from the Court until he had achieved his marriage, why did he not suffer him to go on the Continent on the embassy for which his instructions were drawn,¹ and which would have been a true friend's method of serving his friend? Overbury as ambassador would have returned from abroad, when his embassy was over, grateful to the man who had sent him, and ready to pardon a marriage with which he did not agree, and which he thought would be fatal to his own interests.

The evidence of Simcox, though nothing more than a repetition of the words of Weston, and therefore inconclusive, was at least very damaging, as showing two things: first, Rochester was utterly untrustworthy; and, secondly, he had no intention of procuring his former friend's liberty, because "he could not abide him." Again, when Sir John Lidcote, the prisoner's brother-in-law, contrived to gain access to him, and when Overbury asked him in a whisper if he thought that his patron was playing him false, and received an answer in the affirmative, the Lieutenant was exceedingly angry with him for snatching the opportunity of private conference.² Furthermore, as far as possible, all Overbury's kindred and friends were prohibited from seeing him, and from holding any communication with him. Thus the lingering process of poisoning was able to take its hateful course inch by inch to the bitter end, and small doses were served with everything which he ate or drank. But the basest means of all was adopted when, as sick men are wont to do, he desired tarts and jellies to tempt his jaded appetite. Some of these were poisoned by the art of the Countess and her mean instrument Mrs. Turner, which, instead of tempting the prisoner's appetite, wrought upon and increased his sickness to such an extent that he could hardly endure his pain. That these were poisoned and sent with the knowledge of Rochester and Helwys by the Countess is sufficiently clear from a letter to the Lieutenant sent with

¹ *Aulicus Coquinariæ*, Vol. II. p. 221.

² *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 985.

a batch of the aforesaid tarts. "I was *bid* to bid you say, that these *tarts came not from me*; and again, I was *bid* to tell you, that you must take heed of the tarts, because there be *letters* in them, and, therefore, neither give your wife nor children of them, but of the wine you may, for there are no *letters* in it."¹

This letter was written and signed by the Countess of Essex, who at her trial admitted upon examination "that by *letters* she meant *poison*." That she was speaking the truth must be granted until stronger proof than presumptive evidence or probable supposition can be alleged against it. It may be true that she confessed more than the absolute truth in her terror; but why she should have said that *letters* were *poison*, when they were merely letters, seems inexplicable in any other manner than that she was stating a fact. Nor can it be readily believed that any sane person would enclose letters in wine, though they might have been baked in tarts. But why should Rochester, whose letters could reach Overbury by the ordinary means of transit, use such a means of conveyance, unless there was some dark mystery behind his conduct? He could hardly have used such a device to blind Overbury himself, and he had already taken sufficient care that his messengers were not tampered with by any of Overbury's relatives or friends. Nor is there any hint either in the prisoner's letters which were not baked into tarts, or in the whole of the evidence taken at the trial, of letters being found in such a means of conveyance. Probabilities, therefore, drive the investigator almost irresistibly to the conclusion that the *letters* mean what the Countess confessed that they meant, neither more nor less than poison. Once more, the letter of Lady Essex under examination distinctly asserts that she was *bidden* to warn the Lieutenant. Who then commanded her to warn him in a manner which he well understood? Could it have been any other than her vicious lover, whose letters were supposed to have been sent in this fashion? Who else could have commanded her to tell a deliberate lie, by way of warning? The difficulties of the solution of this perplexed question are great and freely acknowledged, but this much can at least be affirmed, that the tarts were poisoned, and that they were sent with a letter to Helwys from the Countess warning him of the fact, and that that

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 989.

letter points to the knowledge of Rochester that poisoned tarts were being sent to Overbury. Whether he sent them himself, or whether he instructed the Countess to send them, can make little difference to the case as against him; if he were not actually the murderer, he was at least the accomplice.

But the poison of the tarts, from the extreme caution of the poisoners, was not effective in accordance with their hopes and their desires; their victim was indeed made grievously sick almost unto death, but still he did not die. Once, upon the petition of Judge Overbury, the prisoner's father, directly made to the King and conveying information of his son's illness, James promised to send his own physician, which may have been done. But Rochester discouraged the presentation of such petitions as being in no way helpful to the prisoner's delivery. On one occasion he wrote as follows to Mrs. Overbury: "Your stay here in town can nothing avail your son's delivery; therefore I would advise you to retire into the country, and doubt not, that before your coming home you shall hear that he is a freeman."¹ The appalling hypocrisy of such a letter strikes a shudder through the heart of the reader, unless indeed it was written during the earliest days of the imprisonment, before the captive's bitter complaints had goaded the guilty patron into madness and murder. Before the sending of this letter he had discouraged a second attempt on the part of the elder Overbury to reach the King, and to calm his fears he had promised the speedy release of his son.² That this at least was far enough from Rochester's intentions he himself virtually admitted:³ he lied to the prisoner, he lied to his nearest relatives; in short, he proved himself to be so false a friend and so untruthful a man that it is difficult to believe his statements even when given on oath. He had not the fear of death before his eyes, though the sentence might be passed upon him: he knew that the King would not dare to put him to death for fear of compromising revelations which he might make on the scaffold. On one occasion he was on the point of lying in Court, when, recollecting that there might be documentary evidence against him, he corrected himself, and so intensified the growing disbelief of his judges in

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 984.

² *Idem, ibidem*, p. 984.

³ *Idem, ibidem*, p. 993.

his evidence.¹ It is true that Weldon² acquits him of the worst crime of all; but in the face of the verdict of four juries with respect to the mysterious packet,³ and in consideration of the powerful motive which impelled him to forget former friendship, and to shake off once and for ever the arrogant domination of Overbury,⁴ it is difficult to acquit him of the murder, which was now hastening to its awful end.

In the meantime, Paul Lobell, a French physician, on July 3rd, 1613, gave the prisoner a bath, and found his skin fair and clear; whereas after his death the same man saw it in a terrible condition.⁵ He would seem once at least to have given Rochester news of his patient, and to have declared that his recovery was certain if he were set at liberty. But too many secrets of first importance were in Overbury's keeping to suffer him to emerge from prison in a state of hostility to his patron, and his bitterness showed no signs of diminution. When he had been in prison almost five months, and suffered excruciating agonies from the tender mercies of the Countess and her friends, he wrote the following bitter letter,⁶ which, from its importance to a correct judgment of the case, must here be given in full. "This paper comes under seals, and therefore shall be bold to speak to you, as I used to do myself. I understand that you told my brother that my unreverent style should make an alienation betwixt you and me hereafter, at least such a one, as we should never be as we had been. With what face could you tell him that you would be less, to whom you owe more than any soul living, both for your fortune, understanding and reputation? One who lost his fortune with *Ignati*, entered into a quarrel with *Niger*, suffered five months' banishment, and now five months' imprisonment; and now to make so poor a pretence, to say you will alter towards me for the style in my letters? Alas! This shift will

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 986.

² *Court and Character of King James*, p. 115. "Many believe him guilty of Overbury's death, but most thought him guilty only of breach of friendship (and that in a high point) by suffering his imprisonment, which was the highway to his murder; and this conjecture I take to be the soundest opinion," etc. ³ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 989.

⁴ *Idem, ibidem*, p. 980. Cf. *Aulicus Coquinariæ, Secret History of the Reign of King James I.*, Vol. II. p. 221.

⁵ *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 921, 922, 986.

⁶ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. pp. 478, 479. Cf. *State Trials*, Vol. II. pp. 980 seqq.

not serve to cover your vow, your sacrificing me to your woman, your holding a firm friendship with them that brought me hither, and keep me here, and not to make it your first act of any good terms with them to set me free, and restore me to yourself again. And you bid my brother keep your intent secret, that you might steal away with your wickedness.

“But that shall not be; you and I shall come to a public trial before all the friends I have. They shall know what words have passed betwixt us heretofore of another nature than these; and I pray you, keep you my letters, that they may see how much I forgot your Lordship in my style. I shall be upon the rack, you at your ease negligent of me, and I must speak calmly. If Hector of the Harlaw be so infamous for betraying a stranger, your story shall be put down to betray and so quit a friend. But now I will confess to you, so soon as I perceived how little (never name love) human affection, how little compassion (no, not so much as the colt in Enfield Chace); when I heard how notwithstanding my misery, you visited your woman, frizzled your head never more curiously, took care for hangings, and daily were solicitous about your clothes; officiousness in waiting could prefer your cousin and Gibbe; held day traffic of letters with *my enemies*, without any turning it to my good; sent me *nineteen projects and promises for my liberty*, then at the beginning of the next week sent me some frivolous account of the miscarriage of them, and so slip out of town; and all this ill-nature showed by the man whose conscience tells him that *trusting to him brought me hither*, and by him that conveyed all my service to *Julius*,¹ and made himself valued by his master for it, and my share to be a prison on such terms as never man suffered yet; nay, knoweth that what he speaks and writes hourly is mine, and yet can forget him that sowed that in him, and upon whose stock he spends; nay, forget him betwixt whom was nine years’ love, and such secrets of all kinds have passed, and in the noyance, my father and my mother languishing for me. My soul wisheth that she might but lie on the boards to bear me company; my brother Lyd overthrown by it, his aunt discharging him from her house, which saved three hundred pound a year.

¹ *Julius* is the *King*; *Ignati* seems to be *Salisbury*, while *Niger* is either *Northampton* or *Suffolk*.

“ And he that is the *author of all*, and that hath more cause to love me, yea, perish for me rather than see me perish, to stand stupid and lose a jot of anything that concerns himself, go on and make much of one; nay, let my enemies play upon me, send for tickets under my hand; so that by God, since I came in, I have not found the advantage of a straw, but not so much as a servant in my extreme sickness, nor my friends free to speak my last words to. When I had observed this the bitterness of my soul cannot conceal itself in letters: and that wickedness may never die, I have all this vacation wrote the *story betwixt you and me* from the first hour to this day. What I found you when I came; how I lost all the great ones of my country for studying your fortune, reputation and understanding; how many hazards I have run for you; how many gentlemen for giving themselves to you a *stranger* are now left to the oppression of their enemies; what secrets have passed betwixt you and me; and for the last part, how, *when you fell in love with that woman, as soon as you had won her by my letters*, and after all the difficulties being past, then used your own for common passages; but denied, concealed and juggled betwixt your man and yourself; and upon that cause came many breaches at Huntingdon and Newmarket, and after at Whitehall. Thereupon you made your vow that I should live in the Court, was my friend, and many oaths, which are *now*¹ *fulfilled; stayed me here, when I would have been gone, and sent for me twice that day that I was caught in the trap; and intending your thoughts long ago to marriage with that woman, denied me since to have inquired of her; would speak ill of her yourself; and having been now two months reconciled to a league, not to have first, upon those hopes of theirs, made sure of my liberty and return; and now at last, when we may easily live the rest of our life in peace, and enjoy the remembrance of troubles, now you leave me out, and take occasion upon unrespective language to say, you will never more be to me as you have been.* All these particulars I have set down in a *large discourse*, and on *Tuesday* I make an end of writing it fair, and on *Friday* I have sealed it up under *eight seals*, and sent it by a friend of mine, whom I dare trust (taking his oath not to open it), I send to him, and

¹ If the *now* be correct here, it is severely ironical.

them to all my friends, noble and gentle men and women, and then read it to them and take copies of it, and I vowed to have wrote the truth. This I think you will not deny a word. So thus if you will deal thus wickedly with me, I have provided that whether I die or live, your nature shall never die, nor leave to be the most odious man alive."

This letter has been given *in extenso*, both to show Overbury's arrogant assumption of superior ability and the terrible sufferings which he underwent, bodily in respect of the poisoning, and mental in regard to the cruelty and faithlessness of the man who owed so much of his success in life to him. Whether he actually sent the document of which he speaks, or whether he only used a threat to work upon the cowardice of his patron, cannot now be finally decided: but all recognisable traces of it have passed away, unless indeed it be the foundation of the first part of the little tract entitled, *Truth Brought to Light by Time*, which was first published in 1651, and which appears to contain an accurate description of the affairs under discussion, though the chronology is in some respects inaccurate. But if the threatened document shared the fate of many of Overbury's papers and was never delivered, or if the publication was merely a menace, the letter itself derives a tragic importance. Its date must have been shortly before the writer's murder; he had been imprisoned on April 22nd, 1613, and if he wrote to Rochester his last letter during the second week in September, he would have been confined for four months and three weeks, which would nearly make up the "five months" of which he speaks. Nay, it would seem more than probable that Overbury wrote during the week ending on Saturday, September 11th. In that case the threat of exposure gains force as a piece of evidence. By Tuesday, September 14th, the document was to be ready to be despatched from the Tower, and by Friday, September 17th, it was to be placed in the hands of Overbury's friends. There was then a further reason for Rochester to interfere personally in the matter, and to take such measures as would defeat the prisoner's intentions, and secure himself from the exposure of his base ingratitude and his vile conduct. If Overbury's account reached his friends, the Viscount's ruin was assured, and all possibility of his marriage was taken away; it was his object,

therefore, to prevent the truth from being brought to light by any such means.

The sequence of events favours the view that Rochester actually did take such steps as could only have occurred to a base and evil mind. The prisoner was destined never to see September 17th; the threat had had its effect, and on Tuesday evening, September 14th, Weston, assisted by Paul Lobell's boy, administered to the unhappy victim of a degraded woman's wrath a poisoned clyster, from the effects of which he died in great agony on the following morning at five o'clock.¹ The young apothecary was spirited away to the Continent, where he afterwards confessed his share of the transaction, for which he received £20. That the foregoing deductions from Overbury's letter are in any way final is not pretended; but this much may be said for them, that they have a striking coincidence with the sequence of events. If they are in any degree justly deduced, they make Rochester's conduct more odious than even his victim suspected, and they would render certain his active complicity in the infamous plans of the guilty Countess. The man who could treat his friend with such cold and studied cruelty, who could calmly neglect his touching entreaties for freedom, who could continue his disreputable amours with a bitter and despicable woman, who could press on the divorce and marry the woman, whom he must have known to be not merely adulterous but a murderess, who could falsify documents before his trial, and who could lead the prisoner and his parents a will-o'-the-wisp dance of deceitful hope, is not a man to be lightly acquitted of that crime for which his own peers, who had all the evidence before them, condemned him to death.

The difficult problems of the trials of the various participants in the murder of Overbury will not be discussed here; the trials themselves did not take place until nearly two years after the murder, and any account of Overbury naturally ends with Overbury's death. It will be sufficient to remark, that "the little birds," as Weston called them, were all hanged, while the greater sinners were condemned, but reprieved, kept in prison until 1621-2, and finally pardoned by a King whose moral perceptions were so obtuse that he could see nothing particularly disgraceful in the open adultery of his favourite with the

¹ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 481. *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 923.

beautiful but villainous woman whom he married. How the secret of the murder came out is most uncertain. It may be that it was the suggested promotion of Sir Gervas Helwys which gave rise to the sifting of his character and the revival of former rumours of foul play.¹ Or it is possible that the apothecary's assistant, who administered the poisoned clyster, and whose name was Reeve, confessed his crime to Sir William Trumbull, the then ambassador at the Court of Brussels.² But the secret did come out in the end, and the murderers received a tardy but just punishment. Mrs. Turner, "the first inventress of yellow starch, was executed in a cobweb ruff of that colour at Tyburn, and with her that yellow starch, which so much disfigured our nation, and rendered them so ridiculous and fantastic,"³ received its funeral. Weston, Helwys, and Franklin suffered death by hanging; Northampton escaped a trial by dying before the discovery of the original conspiracy, and the Earl and Countess of Somerset were overwhelmed with disgrace, and she died in great agony of a cancer.

The moment that Overbury was dead, the Lieutenant wrote to Rochester and to Northampton, who must have had a consultation before either of them replied. Northampton wrote to Helwys early in the morning of September 15th, bidding him treat the body with all respect out of regard to the wishes of Rochester; but during the day the Earl wrote again an urgent letter to say that if Lidcote, Overbury's brother-in-law, could not at once be summoned to view the body, it must be buried as quickly as possible. This second letter reached the Lieutenant at noon, when he was doubting in his own mind what course to pursue; but he kept the body till four o'clock of the same afternoon, though the effect of the poison was to make it noisome. As Lidcote did not put in an appearance by that time, the body was wrapped in a loose, or as some would have it, a *lousy* sheet, flung into a coarse coffin of the Lieutenant's own providing, and buried in a most unseemly fashion on Tower Hill, with

¹ *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 959. Cf. Birch, *Court and Times of King James I.* Vol. I. pp. 269, 275.

² Weldon, *Court and Character of King James* (1650), p. 94. Cf. *State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 821.

³ James Howell, *Epistolæ Ho-Eliañæ* (Ed. V., 1678); Letter II. pp. 3, 4.

neither a friend nor a relative present to pay the last offices to the dead.¹ Thus died Sir Thomas Overbury in his thirty-third year, a man who deserved a better and a happier fate, betrayed and miserably poisoned by the friend in whom he had trusted. Endowed by Nature with a comely presence, and gifted with much intellectual capacity, he had in himself every element necessary to make a successful courtier and a prudent minister but one. He could not control his overweening arrogance, and his tongue, which was naturally witty, was wont to wag too freely. Attaching himself to a far inferior man, he had led him hither and thither for nearly nine years, until his tyrannical and domineering disposition became intolerable. The freedom of his reproaches, and the exalted claims of services really rendered, which he was in the habit of making, could not fail to prove vexatious to his patron, who was more highly placed in the State; and the fact that those claims were real could not make their constant assertion any the more pleasant.

The intimacy of the two friends was cemented by more than one dark transaction. It is not impossible that both of them, in company with James himself, knew more than has yet been made public concerning the death of Prince Henry. It is quite certain that Overbury, who was troubled with few moral scruples, though he himself was morally pure, did not hesitate to write dainty letters in his patron's behoof to procure him the love of another man's wife. Nor is his guilt at all lessened by the probability that that adulterous passion was already freely bestowed; had he been the rigid moralist which he is sometimes represented to have been, he could not have lent his countenance to an amour as disgraceful as it was fatal to himself. He was a safe repository for State secrets, and at one period of his career it seemed all but certain that he would rise to the highest position in the State. But his head was turned by the knowledge of his own intellectual powers and by the fame which they had assisted him to win at an early age, and his future progress was cut off by his own presumptuous unwisdom. He conducted himself in the eyes of the Court like his patron's master, and he was rash enough to disregard the feelings of the Queen, an offence which she neither forgot nor forgave. It is true that he was very young at the

¹ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. pp. 481, 482.

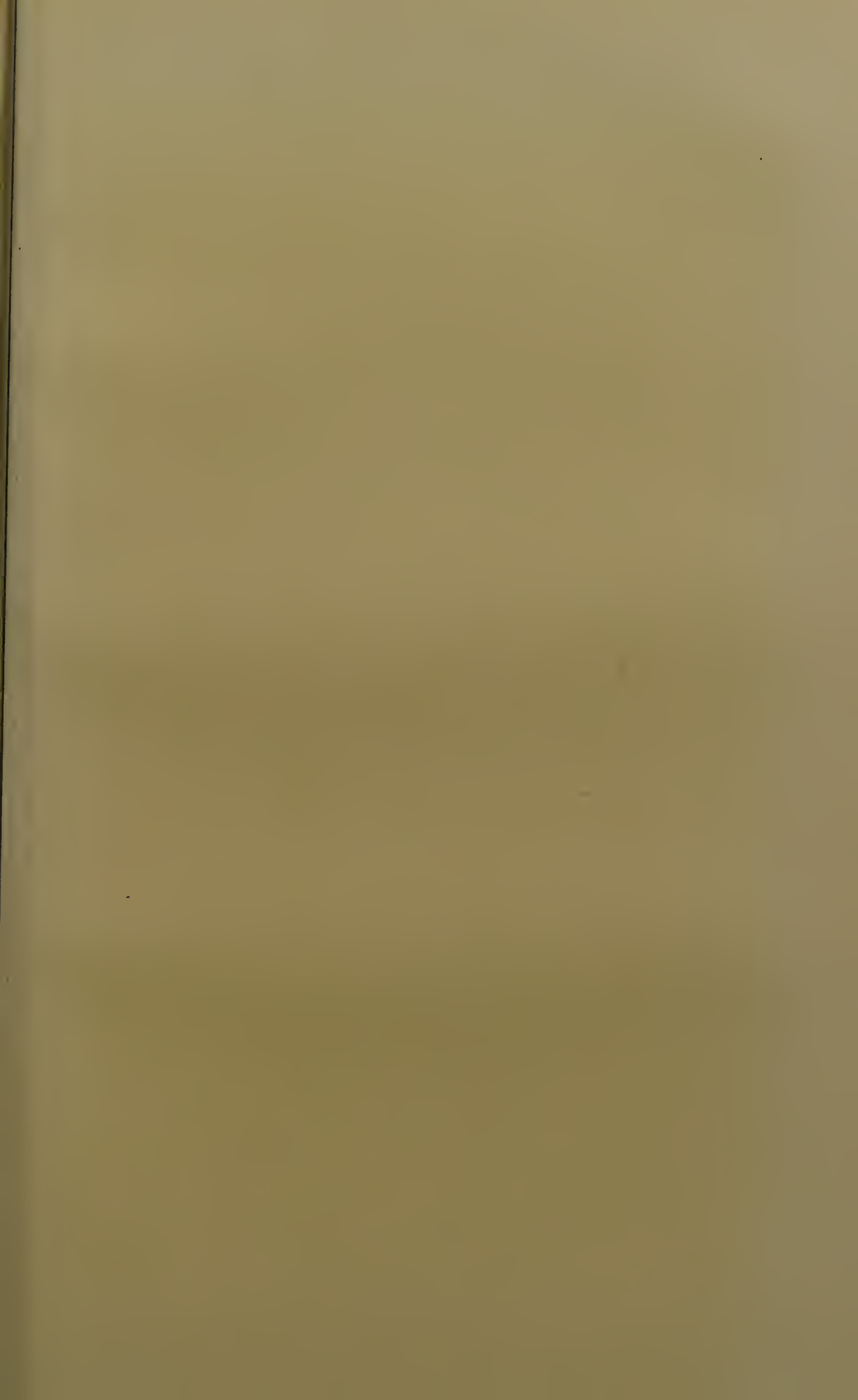
time of his rapid promotion, and his vanity was a young man's peculiar besetting sin. Had he had time to become more habituated to his important and influential position, he might have learned more prudence and less arrogance. But he was cut off in the springtime of his powers, and none can deny that his death was achieved by one of the vilest conspiracies which has disgraced that immoral Court in which it happened.

Overbury's vanity may have made him esteem himself more necessary to Rochester than was actually the case ; but no insolence, however glaring, however intolerable, can condone the great crime to which the unworthy Viscount lent his countenance, if he did not personally take his share in its commission. That he decoyed his secretary into the trap which was his ruin he admitted himself ; that Overbury never extricated himself from that trap, but found that the bait was poisoned, has been abundantly shown above. That Rochester was guilty of the murder itself cannot be proved to demonstration : but the balance of probabilities inclines strongly in that direction. In all cases of poisoning the motive must be allowed its due weight ; and that it was to his interest to rid himself of his troublesome and free-spoken secretary must be freely admitted. Moreover, he had behind him the subtle influence of a thoroughly unprincipled and utterly abandoned woman, whom he had allowed to engross such affections as he possessed. That she would suffer her animosity to sleep cannot for a moment be supposed ; and when she had the all-powerful favourite for her devoted servant, it was not to be expected that she would lose the favourable opportunity of using his influence to secure her revenge. With the prompting of self-interest and the incessant urging of an evil woman to force him along the path to infamy, it is not wonderful that a weak man like Robert Carr should pursue it to the end.

But whether he was guilty of the actual murder, or whether he was innocent, as he persistently maintained at his trial, Rochester was at least guilty of unwarrantable cruelty towards one who had served him only too faithfully, if in a somewhat masterful fashion. He showed himself a perfidious patron, a false friend, a clumsy dissembler, a falsifier of evidence, and a positive liar. That a better man than he fell a victim to his insidious arts, seconded by the craft of a shameless and

vicious woman, cannot be denied. The revolting details of the case throw a lurid light upon the character of the murderess and her accomplice, and they serve to give the most unfavourable impression of the Court of the coarse old King, where such a crime was possible. It must be readily acknowledged that Overbury was by no means that pattern of scrupulous virtue which his eulogists would have us believe ; but he did not merit so ill a fate as to be slowly and painfully murdered by poison. The barbarity of his end is only surpassed by the cold and selfish neglect of the man whom he had done so much to make what he was and in whom he had so blindly trusted. The horror of his fate has shed the genial glamour of pitying respect over his actual sins, which were many ; and the elegies which mourned for his murder are for the most part eulogies of an encomiastic type. But there is a *modicum* of truth even in these, and the concluding lines of a poem written in his honour by one of his friends clearly show, in spite of their exaggeration, how those who knew him best esteemed him most. With them the present brief memoir may fitly close, which has endeavoured to extenuate none of its subject's faults and which has not unduly exalted his great gifts and his real virtues.

“Then you the sire of this your murther'd son,
Repine not at his fate, since he hath won
More honour in his suff'rance; and his death
Succeeded by his virtue's endless breath.
For him, and to his life and death's example,
Love might erect a statue, zeal, a temple;
On his true worth the Muses might be slain,
To dye his honour's web in purest grain.
Though for his worth the Muses all were slain,
His honour's works would raise them up again.”





SIR HENRY WOTTON.

From "Reliquiae Wottonianae" (1672).

THE DIPLOMATIST

SIR HENRY WOTTON

"Integer vitæ scelerisque purus."

HORACE, *Odes* I. xxii. 1.

WHEN the same man at the same time combines in his single person the gifts of courtier, politician, scientist, philosopher, scholar, poet, and man of letters, a supreme degree of excellence is not to be expected in each of these varied attainments, and their fortunate possessor must needs be deemed accomplished, rather than great. That Sir Henry Wotton was accomplished beyond the compass of most men few will venture to dispute; that he was truly great fewer still, save partial friends like Izaak Walton, John Donne and Abraham Cowley, have ventured to assert. His natural and acquired endowments were undoubtedly both numerous and extraordinary; but he does not seem to have been gifted with those especial qualities which unite to make a distinguished statesman, or with that dogged perseverance which is essential to a literary genius. Possibly he squandered his energies upon too many pursuits to do full justice to each, as was often the case in those days, when specialisation had not attained its present prevalence. Yet he played an honourable, and by no means undistinguished, part at home and abroad for many years; while two, if not three, of his poems will be treasured for ever by those who can appreciate true poetry. His despatches are characterized by epigrammatic yet flowing prose; but it must be confessed that he does not appear to have effectively contributed to the final settlement of any diplomatic problem of first-rate importance during his numerous embassies. It is doubtless true that James I., with customary wisdom, sent his ambassador more than once to solve the insoluble, a circumstance which certainly militates against any marked degree of success. But Wotton does not seem to have been a diplomatist of the first

ránk, as far as can be judged from his letters and despatches. His unquestionable learning and his graceful carriage, joined to a happy accident, endeared him to James. The King's superficial observation readily discerned personal accomplishments, and his own scholarship gave him an insight into real learning, when it was unostentatiously presented to him. But he seldom perceived that learning and a handsome person do not of necessity imply the possession of diplomatic ability. Thus he removed Wotton from that sphere of scholarly research in which he was best fitted to shine, and sent him on the Continent to achieve tasks for which he was wholly unfit. By this lack of discrimination, while he may have gratified his ambassador, he sent an insufficient representative of the power and will of Britain to the neighbouring princes, as they soon discovered to their profit.

It is presumptuous for a later chronicler to tread in the footsteps of Izaak Walton, whose life chiefly of the last years of Wotton exhibits a character-sketch drawn with surpassing delicacy and supreme tact. But the simple-hearted old angler, who lived in an age untroubled by chronological qualms, has supplied but few dates, and there are some details of his hero's life unknown to him, which may be gleaned from a careful study of contemporary authorities. With these bare bones of fact the latter-day biographer must perforce content himself; since he cannot hope, let him do his utmost, to come within a measurable distance of honest Izaak's exquisite portraiture. Sir Henry Wotton, his rival diplomatists, and their loyal henchmen have left behind them a great mass of letters which are of supreme use in a survey such as the present, the bulk of which have been consulted, with most of the other available authorities. That more remain unexamined in the Record Office, in the library of Queen's College, Oxford, and in the British Museum, goes without saying; but a close investigation of these would not, in all probability, materially affect the conclusions to be set forth hereafter. It is sufficient to say that the estimate of Wotton's diplomatic talents, which has been derived from independent research, agrees in substance with that of Doctor Gardiner, and humbler historians can give no sounder authority for the men and matters of this particular period. Every fact or inference given below is based upon contemporary evidence, which is recorded in

the notes, and where errors, such as are unavoidable, are made, they are in the main due to the chronological inexactitude of writers who had not yet learned the value of strict accuracy in this important department of history. If the picture to be presented is less favourable than Wotton's numerous admirers are entitled to expect, every effort has been made to depict the man as he was, without idealisation and with an honest and whole-hearted respect for one who lived in the main a spotless life in one of the most corrupt periods of our annals.

Henry Wotton was the youngest son of Thomas Wotton, of Bocton Hall, Bocton-Malherb, which is situated about six miles east of Maidstone, in the very heart of Kent. Here for many previous generations the family of Wotton had dwelt in patriarchal fashion on their own estate, while some of its members had already won no mean distinction in statecraft and diplomacy. Dr. Nicholas Wotton,¹ who, amongst his numerous appointments, was Dean of Westminster, had been Privy Councillor to Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, a circumstance which serves to show his cautious diplomatic talents. He had been sent on nine several embassies to foreign Courts, in which he has been justly credited with good service to his country. Thomas Wotton, the son of Sir Robert Wotton, was his nephew, who, scorning the unsubstantial glare of Court life, preferred to spend his days in the tranquil retirement of a country gentleman. He is said to have successfully resisted the allurements of knighthood and the promises of further favour made to him by Elizabeth, when she halted at his mansion during one of her splendid progresses; and to his death he remained true to his unambitious love of the calm countryside.² Among his children by his first wife was Edward, who was knighted by the Queen and appointed to the important office of Comptroller of the Royal Household, in which he was continued by her successor, by whom he was raised to the peerage.³ Somewhere about the year 1566 his first wife died, leaving him with three sons and several daughters; but the sons, with their heirs male, died during the life of Sir Henry, as a pathetic letter of his to his nephew by

¹ *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ* (1672), p. iii. N.B.—Walton's life has no pagination; hence its pages have been here denoted by Roman numerals.

² Camden, *Britannia* (Gibson's Translation), col. 192.

³ *Idem, ibidem.*

marriage, Sir Edmund Bacon, sadly shows. So the ancient name became extinct in the direct line, to the infinite sorrow of its last possessor; and though the blood may by marriage have flowed into channels not less distinguished, it lost its distinctive mark when his name was engraved on his tomb at Eton.¹

Thomas Wotton found that the cares of his family and estate could not be easily supported without the counsel and company of a wife; and when his widower's thoughts were turned towards a second marriage, he laid down for himself three indispensable conditions for his future partner. First, she was to have no children; secondly, she must be free from the subtle entanglements of the law; and thirdly, she must be of another stock than his own.² Bitter experience of the profitable delays of legal business had taught him the wholesome lesson not to add to his cares the lawsuits of a wife. But, in spite of his precautionary wisdom, his second wife fulfilled none of the foregoing requisites. She was one of his kindred, she had children, and she was involved in the tedious toils of the law. It was while he was endeavouring to settle one of his own claims that he met Eleanora, the widow of Robert Morton, of Kent, who was similarly employed; and, struck by her comely discretion, he made her his wife. Her personal charms and her intellectual endowments left him no reason to regret his unforeseen choice, and on March 30th, 1568, their only son, Henry, was born.³ Younger by several years than his half-brothers, he soon showed signs of that precocity which made him grow up into a distinguished scholar and a man of rare accomplishments. In his earliest boyhood his mother took sole charge of his education, but when he was old enough his father engaged a private tutor for him, and finally sent him to Winchester College, which even in those days of scholastic rigour was noted for the extreme severity of its discipline.⁴

In his sixteenth year he was entered as a gentleman commoner at New College, Oxford, where he matriculated on June 5th, 1584.⁵ He appears, like many students of his standing, to have had rooms at Hart Hall, where he may have met the famous historian Sir Richard Baker.⁶

¹ *Reliquiæ*, p. 477.

² *Idem (Life)*, pp. vi., vii.

³ Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol. II. col. 643.

⁴ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, p. vii.

⁵ *Register of the University of Oxford* (Oxford Historical Society), Vol. II. Part II. (*Matriculations*), p. 135.

⁶ *Reliquiæ*, p. 351.

In the course of a year, or a little more, he migrated to Queen's College, where he became attached to that ingenious, but not absolutely pellucid poet, John Donne, and where he took his Bachelor's degree on June 8th, 1588.¹ Here, too, he was induced by his companions to compose his tragedy of *Tancredo*, the plot of which, from his fondness for Italian, he may have taken direct from Tasso, and which gained him no small reputation from its excellent characterization and the pithy speech of the persons represented.² This youthful effort has not survived; but the preservation of its name and reputation is an adequate testimony to its real worth. During his residence at Oxford, Wotton applied himself to knowledge in all its branches with rare and persistent diligence, though even at this period he seems to have contemplated the possibilities of a public career. Unless Wood is mistaken, on the very day of his graduation, or perhaps for that purpose, he applied for permission to read any book of the Logic of Aristotle, which was willingly granted by the regents of his College.³ Possibly he was preparing to take his Master's degree, of which there is no record. Izaak Walton, indeed, indicates the year in which he is said to have done so as 1588, when he read three Latin Lectures *De Oculo*, concerning the form, motion, and "curious composure" of the eye. But Wotton can hardly have taken his Master's and his Bachelor's degree on the same day, and as to the latter the University Register is decisive. It would seem, then, that in the natural course of events he would have proceeded to take his Master's degree; but be that as it may, the Latinity of his discourse on the eye attracted the attention of Albericus Gentilis, of Ancona, the eminent Professor of Civil Law in Oxford, who from the time of its delivery was wont to style his young favourite, *Henrice mi ocelle*. Wotton, who was then in his twentieth year, assiduously cultivated the friendship of this distinguished Italian, with the result that in a little more than a year he became a fluent and exact speaker of Italian, a faculty which stood him in good stead during his later life.⁴

How soon he began to dally with poetry does not appear; but in his collected works are some lines to a false

¹ *Oxford University Register* (as above), Vol. II. Part III. (*Degrees*), p. 151.

² *Reliquiæ (Life)*, p. viii.

³ Wood, *Athenæ*, Vol. II. col. 643.

⁴ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, pp. viii., ix.

mistress, which can hardly have been written at any other time than the present. It is, of course, possible that the little poem was written eight years later, when Wotton returned from his European travels. But he would then have been twenty-eight years of age, in which case Walton would hardly have called it *A Poem written by Sir Henry Wotton in his Youth*. The lines themselves, which are solitary in their kind among his surviving poems, express a depth of feeling which points to a real though unknown mistress, to whom the young scholar had been devotedly attached, but in vain. They run thus:—

“O faithless world, and thy more faithless part,—
 A woman's heart!
 The true shop of variety, where sits
 Nothing but fits,
 And fevers of desire, and pangs of love,
 Which toys remove.
 Why was she born to please, or I to trust
 Words writ in dust?
 Suffering her eyes to govern my despair,
 My pain for air;
 And fruit of time rewarded with untruth,
 The food of youth.
 Untrue she was; yet I believed her eyes
 (Instructed spies),
 Till I was taught that love was but a school
 To breed a fool.
 Or sought she, more by triumphs of denial,
 To make a trial
 How far her smiles commanded my weakness?
 Yield and confess,
 Excuse no more thy folly; but for cure,
 Blush and endure
 As well thy shame as passions that were vain;
 And think 'tis gain
 To know that love lodg'd in a woman's breast
 Is but a guest.”¹

These acrid lines, which have none of the cuckoo-chime of gallantry about them, breathe forth the bitterness of disappointed affection, and their philosophy is that poorest of all makeshifts for stoicism to “make a virtue of necessity.” Whoever the obdurate fair one may have been, Wotton had learned his lesson, and he has left no indication of a second passion for a kinder mistress; he had been taught by that drastic teacher, unrequited love, and his lesson lasted the length of his life.

In 1589, or at the beginning of 1590, his father died,

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 377, 378.

leaving him the meagre provision of one hundred merks yearly, chargeable on one of his manors—a veritable younger brother's portion, which may have been the source of Wotton's unfortunate tendency to live beyond his income.¹ As soon as he received his allowance he determined to travel through Western Europe, not omitting to visit Italy, in spite of the serious dangers which were entailed by such a visit. He appears to have journeyed through the Low Countries and a part of Germany, until he arrived at Altdorf, a little university-suburb of Nüremberg, where he stayed some time, and where he probably met his friend and subsequent patron, Edward, Lord Zouch. From Altdorf he set out by way of Ingolstadt to Vienna, which he reached on November 11th, 1590, and where he remained until April 20th, 1591.² Zouch purposed to follow him, and Wotton spent much of the first weeks of his time in an attempt, ultimately successful, to find his patron a lodging.³ He did not find living in Vienna so economical as it was at an English university, though it was not so expensive as at Altdorf, where provisions were much dearer, though wine was somewhat cheaper, than in the Austrian capital. By the middle of December, after free entertainment by an unknown Court favourite, and provision with learned men on the same inexpensive terms, he became settled in the house of Dr. Blotius, the Imperial Librarian. Here his study adjoined the library itself, and he had the further advantage of the valuable assistance of his learned host.⁴ Ten days later he had come to terms for his bed and board, whereupon he wrote to Zouch: "I am now at two florins a week, chamber, stove and table; lights he finds me; wood I buy myself; in which respect I hold your Honour right happy, that you come in the summer, for we can hardly come by them here without two dollars the closter (*sic*), though we border upon Bohemia. Wine I have as much as it pleaseth me, for my friend and self, and not a stint, as the students of Altdorf. All circumstances considered, I make my account that I spend more at this reckoning by five-pound four shillings yearly than a good careful scholar in the universities of England."⁵ On this state-

¹ *Reliquiæ* (Ed. IV., from which all the quotations from the letters to Zouch are taken, it being the first in which they appear), p. 697.

² *Idem*, pp. 585, 587, 647.

³ *Idem*, pp. 587, 598, 602, etc.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 596.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 509.

ment of expenditure it may be remarked that five pounds four shillings out of a yearly income of under seventy pounds must of necessity count for much, and it is clear that Wotton was more than once sorely pinched during his travels.

For the first three years of his residence abroad Wotton was a constant correspondent with Lord Zouch, and his letters overflow with delightful wit, delicate grace and sound information. It is obvious from their perusal that he had already in his mind his posthumously printed work, *The State of Christendom*,¹ and the information with which he supplied Zouch he begged his friend to keep to himself, both because its possession was dangerous and because he intended to publish it when he had completed his book. Almost every letter contains a detailed statement of the position of political parties, and the purposes, so far as they could be learned, of the monarchs and princelets amongst whom Wotton was from time to time living.² So perilous was his purposed visit to Italy that he was obliged to spread a rumour among the English merchants at Vienna that he intended to travel to Constantinople, for fear lest they should stay him in accordance with a prohibition issued by the Queen, who was afraid that her subjects might be enticed into the Roman Church³ if they came within the range of Papal influence. Wotton, by his astute device, succeeded in keeping his ultimate destination secret from all save his patron and friend, whom he hoped to meet at Venice, a city which he purposed to make his headquarters during his stay in Italy.

His last letter from Vienna, which is dated April 21st, 1591, must have been written only a few days before he set out upon his southward pilgrimage. In it there are traces of a misunderstanding between the two friends, which had arisen from some real or fancied neglect of Zouch on Wotton's part, but which was soon ended. The prudent scholar, who may have learned by experience, warned his patron against an English impostor; as he says, "His name is Abraham Miller, of a very low stature,

¹ This book was printed eighteen years after Wotton's death, in 1657, and not in 1637, as a printer's error states in Dr. Ward's *Sir Henry Wotton* (1898), a book which must be read with great caution from the number of mistakes which it contains.

² *Reliquiæ*, p. 611, etc.

³ *Idem*, p. 612.

a great drunkard, full of words and lies, not able to keep his own dishonesty close, which he tells with a pride, red-faced ; if he come to your Honour, you may know him by this description.”¹ It is not known if the letter served its charitable purpose ; but there can be little doubt that the old proverb of “once bitten, twice shy” was true of Wotton, and from the bitterness of his own experience he wished to spare his friend’s pocket.

A long interval at this point occurs in the correspondence with Zouch, perhaps because some of Wotton’s letters to him have been lost ; for it is not until May 8th, 1592, that we find a letter dated from Florence and addressed to his friend.² The letter itself, however, gives some interesting indications of Wotton’s route and doings in Italy. Whether he awaited his patron’s arrival at Vienna or whether he met him at Venice is wholly uncertain ; but the correspondence shows that the two friends spent some time together in Italy, and the long interval during which there are no letters points to the fact that the travellers were at that time in the enjoyment of one another’s society. As will be seen later, Wotton’s carelessness as a correspondent makes this circumstance probable, rather than positively certain ; but the inference is so natural that it cannot be lightly passed by. His letter from Florence is of great interest, as it reveals the dangers of travelling in Italy, and gives a racy account of his method of reducing their magnitude. “Since taking my humble leave of your Honour at Padua,” he writes, “have passed three months, of which time I have spent one month and two days at Rome, eight in Naples, the rest in perpetual motion, until the 25th April, on which day I returned to Florence. From Venice to Rome I had the company of the Baron of Berlo, with whom, notwithstanding his Catholic religion, I entered into very intrinsical familiarity, having persuaded him that I was half his countryman, himself being born, though under the Duke of Cleves, yet not far from Cologne, which was my town.”³ Thus it is manifest that Wotton discreetly veiled his Protestantism, and passed for a German during much of his journeying through Italy. Moreover, the danger which an English Protestant incurred in entering Rome was so great that he was compelled to adopt a

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 647–650, especially p. 650.

² *Idem*, pp. 651–663.

³ *Idem*, p. 651.

cunning device when he arrived at the ancient city. "I entered Rome," he writes, "with a mighty blue feather in a black hat; which, though itself were a slight matter, yet surely did it work in the imagination of men three great effects. First, I was by it taken for no English, upon which depended the ground of all. Secondly, I was reputed as light in my mind as in my apparel (they are not dangerous men that are so). And, thirdly, no man could think that I desired to be unknown, who, by the wearing of that feather, took a course to make myself famous through Rome in a few days."¹ Wotton's stratagem succeeded in accordance with his desires; and passing for a foreigner of a careless disposition, and possibly for a German Catholic, he was enabled to see what he came to see, to gather information of a highly interesting character, and even to come into contact with the celebrated Cardinal Bellarmine.

During this his first visit he remained ten days only at Rome, from which he was driven by a fever caught from the confined air of the city and from the meagre diet of Lent. By March 18th, 1592, he reached Naples, where he remained a week, and whence he took a wherry bound for Genoa. After two days' exposure to the tenderness of pirates and the dangers of the deep, he landed in safety at Neptune, on the coast of Tuscany, on March 27th. Here he spent Easter, in order that he might not be compelled to go in procession with the Pope to the Lateran, which would have been his unwilling fate had he been in Rome. This circumstance, which is trivial in itself, seems to point to the probability that he at this time passed for a Catholic. When Easter was well over and its peculiar festivities at an end, he took his way to Rome by land, where he stayed three weeks, and he would have stayed longer but for the indiscretion of a gentleman unknown and as yet untraceable.² While he was in the Papal capital he witnessed such ceremonies as the "consecration of the rose, marriage and distribution unto the Virgins, and the taking possession," upon which he could hardly have failed to gaze with an Englishman's scorn, not unmingled with curiosity. He was also fortunate enough to be a spectator of the enthronement of the Pope, a sight of much superstitious grandeur. Here, too, he discovered a plot laid by the Jesuits against his friend and him-

¹ *Reliquiæ*, p. 652.

² *Idem*, pp. 652-655.

self, of which he gives the following account: "My Lord Zouch and Henry Wotton are especially laid wait for in Rome, and through the King of Spain's dominions, as I have been signified; for one either of Venice or Padua hath written unto a certain Florentine, of a great practice with strangers to inquire after me amongst the *Dutch* nation, which was done not long after my departure from Venice. I have not yet searched out the bottom of it."¹ Of this plot no further evidence is left: it may have been a trap laid by the English Queen's representative to prevent the two friends from visiting Rome; but it is far more likely to have been a Jesuit plot to bring them before the Inquisition. One thing is interesting to note—namely, that the authorities had discovered Wotton's habit of passing for a German traveller, and had directed search to be made for him in the German quarter of Florence.² This investigation was made immediately after his arrival at that city, after he had left Zouch at Padua or Venice.

At Florence, which he calls "a Paradise inhabited by devils,"³ he lodged in the Via Larga with one Signor Baccio Boni, at whose house he seems to have remained during the whole of his stay in that beautiful city. But he began to pine for the fellowship of his countrymen, and to hear his mother-tongue spoken once more; and he begged his friend to send on any English traveller who might be coming in his direction, since "he was very desirous of English company."⁴ During his leisure he employed himself as usual in laying hold of such diplomatic secrets and pieces of political information as he could acquire, all of which he transmitted to his patron. Clement VIII. had become Pope; but he did not for the most part enter into any wide schemes of Papal aggression, but wisely contented himself with an earnest

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 662, 663.

² The itinerary just given by quotation from the foregoing letter does not accord with Dr. Ward's inexact expression (p. 29), that Wotton came to a halt at Florence after visiting "Genoa, Naples, and it would seem Venice." He did not visit Genoa until he had finally left Florence on his way to Geneva (*Reliquiæ*, p. 709), and he came from Venice to Florence (*Idem*, p. 653). He did intend to return to Zouch at Venice (*Idem*, p. 653), and he may have done so, though there is no direct evidence to justify a positive assertion on the matter. His route to Geneva, as will be seen later, may be taken as favouring the supposition, but it remains a supposition still.

³ *Reliquiæ*, p. 673.

⁴ *Idem*, pp. 663–667.

attempt to purify Rome from its terrible moral corruption. Still, he was Pope, with much political influence as such, and while Wotton was at Florence the Archduke Maximilian visited his Holiness, on a mission in part religious, but not untinged with political considerations. Our traveller had a natural curiosity to learn what was the meaning of this Archducal pilgrimage, but in this he was compelled to remain unsatisfied. About this time too he fell into straitened circumstances, which was with him an almost chronic condition : he had found travelling in Italy very expensive, and in a letter, which informs Zouch of the death of his brother Edward's wife and the retirement into solitude of his brother John, he complains, half jocosely, half pathetically : "My Roman voyage did stand me one hundred and forty-six crowns, with the best frugality I could use ; so that though there were pleasure in it, and I hope some profit, yet did it pinch the shoulder of a younger brother. There is no weapon beats us more than the storm of expenses."¹ Zouch evidently thought that his friend was fishing, and he sent him thirty crowns, which were doubtless welcome to their recipient, but which he was sincerely anxious to repay before either his friend or himself left Italy.²

From Florence Wotton proceeded to Siena, as soon as he had obtained letters of recommendation from Ferdinand de Medici, the Archduke of Tuscany, and visited the chief towns of Etruria in his way.³ At Siena he remained three months, during which he was still busied in the collection of political information and State secrets. He then made his way through "the better towns of Lombardy, as Genoa, Milan and the rest,"⁴ and journeyed through the Grisons to Geneva. This route would seem to indicate that he revisited Venice, of which, however, nothing is said, possibly because Lord Zouch himself was there. If the two friends met once more at the city of a hundred islands, their meeting would account for the absence of letters and allusions to a visit which Wotton had no need to describe. But in the absence of evidence conjecture is rather an ingenious than a sufficient cloak for ignorance, and the balance of probabilities, however nicely poised, does not constitute historical fact. It was not until August 22nd, 1593, that Wotton arrived at Geneva.

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 684, 685.

³ *Idem*, p. 698.

² *Idem*, p. 702.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 709.

which he found "marvellous unpleasant, and the French a badly grounded people." He had one consolation in his general and pronounced dislike of his new place of abode, in the happy circumstance that he was lodged, "to his very great contentment, in the house of Mr. Isaac Casaubon."¹ The eminent scholar was greatly captivated by agreeable converse with his English guest, whose carriage was genial and graceful, and whose learning was unusually varied for his years. The two students spent much time together in their favourite occupations, and Casaubon inspired Wotton with his own enthusiasm for the Greek language. But best of friends must part, and in the autumn of 1594 the English scholar set out on his way homewards to find a means of increasing his own inconsiderable income.

So great indeed had Wotton's influence been over Casaubon that he was able to play his kindly host a wholly unjustifiable cantrip. He succeeded in persuading him to become his security for two loans, which together amounted to two hundred and thirty golden crowns, to trust him for thirty-three more, which remained unpaid for bed and board, and to stand his surety for the very horse upon which he rode away. Richard Thompson had introduced Wotton to the French scholar, and it was to him that Casaubon wrote a passionate letter, detailing his troubles, but at the same time excusing his debtor. This letter,² which was dated October 3rd, 1594, appears to have produced no response either from Thompson, to whom it was written, or from Wotton himself. The latter had promised to send the money to pay his debt from Frankfort, but, as was common with him, he had promised more than he could fulfil. The same day Casaubon wrote an anxious but affectionate letter to Wotton, pointing out his dangers and difficulties, in case the moneys for which he was security should be demanded.³ Still he received no answer, and it may well be imagined that his at no time very equable temper was sorely tried by the heartless neglect of one whom he had loved and served at a severe pinch. His impatience and the positive risk which he ran are pathetically shown in a letter to

¹ *Reliquiæ*, p. 709.

² *Casaubonorum Epistolæ* (1709), Ep. DCCCCXC. p. 578.

³ *Idem*, Ep. DCCCCXCI. pp. 578, 579.

Scaliger, written on October 7th, 1594,¹ in which he did not even then lay the blame on Wotton, but upon "the perfidy of certain merchants." Whether his letters reached his debtor or not is, of course, uncertain; but Wotton's habits of procrastination and his forgetfulness of absent friends make this more than probable. But in any case he does not appear to have bethought him of repaying his debt until Christmas, 1595, thus keeping his benefactor stretched upon the tenter-hooks of protracted anxiety for more than a year. His attempt at repayment was unsuccessful, and it was not until after March, 1596,² that a light-hearted letter containing the exact sum of the debt reached the troubled scholar. The tone of Wotton's epistle gives the present-day reader, who has any appreciation of the necessity of speedy payment of such obligations, the most unfavourable impression of his unpardonable carelessness, which would even have suffered a friend to whom he was greatly indebted to run the risk of a gaol in his service.

The exact date of Wotton's return to England is not yet ascertained; but it is evident from the foregoing correspondence, in which he wrote from England, that Izaak Walton's date is incorrect in assigning nine years as the length of his sojourn abroad upon this occasion.³ In the autumn of the year 1594 he set out, according to his intention, homewards, as the letters to Casaubon plainly show. His route is uncertain, but it may be assumed without any undue stretching of probabilities that he followed out his own design of passing through a part of Switzerland and the Low Countries.⁴ How long he spent on his travels may be uncertain; but by the 3rd of October, 1595, he had been some time in London, he had paid several political visits to the Marquis of Baden, who had then been a full week in the metropolis, and he had risen into high favour with the Earl of Essex.⁵ Possibly Lord Zouch had introduced him to Elizabeth's great

¹ *Casaubonorum Epistolæ*, Ep. xvii. pp. 11, 12.

² *Epp. ad Casaubonum*, v. p. 642.

³ *Reliquiæ* (III.), *Life*, pp. xii., xiii.

⁴ *Idem* (IV.), p. 709.

⁵ *Historical MSS. Commission, Hatfield MSS.*, Pt. V. p. 400. A careful perusal of the letter there quoted from Ambrose Rogers to Wm. Waad, dated Oct. 3rd, 1595, should have saved Dr. Ward (p. 31) from the inexact statement "By 1597" etc., when it is obvious from the letter, which was written from London, that Wotton must have returned from his travels two years earlier.

favourite, into whose household he was admitted in some unknown capacity, and whose secretary he became next year in conjunction with Henry Cuffe. His negligence, therefore, to Casaubon falls little short of a crime, when we consider that he was striving to feather his own nest, while he was leaving that of his old friend dangerously bare. No excuse will be attempted for his conduct; for it is difficult to believe that, had he made an effort, he could not have paid his debt in a shorter space than nearly two years, and that too without answering Casaubon's pathetic appeals. It would seem, then, that Walton's period of *nine* years must include the five and a half years which have already been described and the three and a half which he spent in exile after the final fall and execution of his great patron.

From scattered hints in contemporary correspondence it would seem that the Earl of Essex's family was not exactly a happy family. Wotton was jealous of his fellow-secretaries, one of whom, Edward Reynolds, in a letter to Anthony Bacon, dated October 21st, 1595, complains somewhat bitterly of his false accusations to the Earl.¹ Indeed, Wotton's early career was marked by questionable conduct on more than one occasion. In the same year Godfrey Aleyn had been appointed attendant to Antonio Perez, Secretary of the King of Spain, when the latter journeyed to France. He was found treacherous alike to his patron and to the Earl of Essex, who had recommended him to his post. Wotton was sent to France in December, 1595, to inform Antonio, and to apprehend Aleyn, with whom he returned to England early in January of the following year. Aleyn was imprisoned in the Clink for his treachery,² and Wotton increased the confidence which his patron already had conceived towards him. But about this time he fell out with his cousin Anthony Bacon, who speaks with some asperity of him, and accuses him with too much reason of keeping back letters to and from his patron.³ He was, however, too serviceable a man to spare, and in December, 1596, he was appointed "secretary for Transylvania, Polonia, Italy, Germany."⁴ Whether he ever went on this mission or

¹ Birch, *Queen Elizabeth* (1754), Vol. I. pp. 309, 310.

² *Idem*, Vol. I. pp. 346, 347.

³ *Idem*, Vol. I. pp. 441, 443; Vol. II. pp. 106, 144, 149.

⁴ *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 243.

not cannot now be decided. But it does not seem probable, as his patron would hardly be inclined to dismiss so accomplished a servant to so far a country, when he himself was planning his two voyages against Spain. The foregoing hints of Wotton's conduct in the household of Essex are in themselves slight; but they serve to confirm three of the charges brought against him by the diplomatists of the succeeding reign—namely, that he was untruthful, jealous, and apt to boast. It is in this light, which they throw upon his character as a young man, that their sole value consists; and if the light be not too favourable, it would at all events appear to exhibit the truth.

It is further alleged that Wotton attended Essex on his ill-fated voyage to Cadiz in 1596; but, though there is no inherent improbability in the assertion, there is no evidence in his surviving letters or works that he ever was in or near Spain. It is next to impossible that so curious an observer of men and things as Wotton undoubtedly was, had he really taken this journey, should have passed it over in complete silence. Izaak Walton is our sole authority for the statement, and that his authority counts for something cannot be denied, as he may have received the assertion from Wotton's own lips.¹ But gentle Izaak, when he is unsupported by other evidence, can only leave the matter at issue doubtful. Similar criticism applies to the further statement that he also accompanied his patron to the Azores in 1597; but of this again there is no evidence save Walton's. It may, of course, with some show of fairness be contended that Wotton would wish to say as little as possible about the disgraced favourite during the last few years of the reign of Elizabeth; but inference is not evidence, and once more it must be noted that in the absence of other evidence Walton's word alone is not sufficient. There is a letter of Wotton's to the Earl dated from Plymouth, December 30th, 1597;² but from this no sound inference can be drawn, save that the writer was in England at the date specified. Essex had arrived from his not-too-glorious campaign in November of the same year; but neither in Monson's narrative, who was one of the commanders, nor in Purchas, is there any record of Wotton's presence during the expedition.³ Still, it is not

¹ *Reliquiæ* (III.), *Life*, p. xiv.

² *Idem* (IV.), p. 713.

³ Monson, *Last Seventeen Years of Elizabeth*, pp. 27-39. Purchas, *Pilgrims*, Vol. IV. pp. 1920-1969.

impossible that he did actually sail on this voyage, and that he was left behind at Plymouth with the fleet to see to the Earl's affairs, while the Earl himself posted off to London to justify himself in the eyes of his offended mistress. Such a conjecture is only put forward with the greatest diffidence ; but it has just this much to be said in its favour, that it would agree with Izaak Walton, who must have got most of the facts of Wotton's early life from Wotton himself.

That he was much trusted by the Earl of Essex appears from the next passing mention of him, which is to be found in a letter from Rowland White to Sir Robert Sidney, which bears the date of September 19th, 1599,¹ wherein he is stated to have been one of the six commissioners nominated to treat for an armistice with the Earl of Tyrone. The disastrous result of this expedition and its fatal termination to Essex and to Henry Cuffe, his other secretary, are too well known to need any special mention here. It is sufficient to say that Wotton did not wait to share his patron's disgrace and death, but, with more prudence than pluck, betook himself once more to the Continent, to his old friends in Italy, in order to escape the storm of the Queen's anger.² Here he spent his time for the most part in Florence and Venice, and it is generally believed that he occupied his time in putting together the materials which he had been so long collecting into their finished form of the *State of Christendom*. This interesting but unsatisfactory work was cut short by Wotton's death, which prevented him from bringing it down to the end of the reign of James I., and it was not published until 1657, or eighteen years after its author's death. The book contained so much matter displeasing to the great noblemen at home that the reason of its delay in publication is easily intelligible. It is written in a flowing, lucid, and exceedingly frank style, which captivates rather than enlightens the reader ; but its diplomatic insight is limited and its conclusions inadequate. It is, of course, possible that Wotton's own dilatoriness in the completion of his book may have prevented its earlier appearance ; but he has enough sins of procrastination to burden his memory without such an addition, and when

¹ *Sidney Papers*, Vol. II. p. 125.

² *Reliquiæ (Life)*, p. xv. N.B.—The succeeding quotations are taken from Ed. III. (1672).

there is another reason which is sufficiently sound, it may well be adopted to save his credit.

At this time he renewed his friendship with Casaubon, who would seem to have quite forgiven his carelessness, now that the dangerous debt was paid. Wotton had written to him promising to compose in Greek a book on *Fate*, and to dedicate the work to the chief source of his fondness for the Greek tongue. Casaubon replied with much affection, "*Parem constantiam amoris tui mihi spondeo.*"¹ The distinguished Frenchman was now Professor in Paris, from which his letter was dispatched on July 29th, 1602. It overflows with tender remembrance of past happy days in Geneva, and discreetly omits any mention of the cause of the temporary difference between the two friends. The book, like so many of Wotton's purposes, literary and otherwise, was left to take care of itself, and Casaubon was doomed to disappointment in the pleasant compliment which had been promised to him. His conduct throughout their intercourse shines by comparison with that of Wotton, whose negligence will have to be censured with some severity later on, and who never seems to have realized that the great French scholar deserved as considerate treatment as he was in the habit of giving to his English friends. Which of the two men made the first advances towards reconciliation in the present case is not known; but careful critics of their relations will be inclined to the uncharitable suspicion that Wotton renewed the intimacy with the intention of making use of his friend once more, though not in the same way as on the previous occasion. He knew the value of a well-placed friend while he was abroad, from considerable experience, and he was not likely to let such a favourable opportunity slip of using a friend so distinguished as Casaubon.

During his stay at Florence in the beginning of the year 1603 an event occurred which was destined to be the turning-point of Wotton's fortunes. He had entered into a close intimacy with Vietta, the trusted minister of Ferdinand, Archduke of Tuscany, and doubtless he was in part supported by Ferdinand's munificence. At that time assassination by poison or dagger was a familiar and expeditious method of silencing a formidable foe; and the Archduke discovered a real or pretended plot to murder by one or the other of these means James VI. of Scotland,

¹ *Casaubonorum Epistolæ*, ccxci. p. 153.

who was looked upon as a dangerous menace to the interests of Rome, and as a source of especial inconvenience to the Pope, if he succeeded in uniting the crowns of England and Scotland. Disdaining to profit by so dastardly a method of dealing with an enemy, Ferdinand, acting upon the advice of Vietta, sent Wotton with a casket of antidotes and a warning by letter to the destined victim of the plot. Bearing the name of Ottavio Baldi, and speaking the tongue of an Italian, the messenger travelled by way of Norway to Scotland, probably to escape danger from English ships. When he appeared in the royal presence he laid aside his long rapier and delivered his letters in Italian to the King in the face of his trusted councillors. But he took the opportunity of coming nearer to James, and of whispering in his ear that he was an Englishman and a friend. He then intreated the boon of a private audience and the concealment of his nationality during his abode in Scotland. Here he remained three months in high favour with the King, to whom he was able to give much information of the state of affairs in Rome and Northern Italy, after which, as Walton naïvely remarks, he "departed as true an Italian as he came thither." That James's gratitude would be insured goes without saying: never was king more timorous of assassination, nor less forgetful of those whom he imagined to be his preservers.¹ As much doubt has been cast upon the reality of this plot as upon that of the better known Gowrie Conspiracy; but it is certain that Wotton came to Scotland in good faith to deliver what he himself believed to be a real warning, and his subsequent rise in favour points to James's concurrence with his messenger's conviction. It is little short of wonderful that he should have been able to pass so long for an Italian, when he was continually hearing a variety of his own language spoken around him, and the whole circumstance does credit both to Wotton's natural capacity and to his skilful acquirement of the art of concealing an important and dangerous fact.

To the Archduke he returned, and received a warm welcome and hearty thanks for the consummate ability with which he had conducted a hazardous and by no means easy enterprise. It is not impossible that Wotton would have remained for some time longer under the

¹ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, pp. xvii.-xix.; cf. also p. 246.

protection and in the employment of Ferdinand, who maintained more than one exiled Englishman, had not the to him welcome news of the death of Elizabeth reached his ears. Learning at the same time the still pleasanter tidings that James VI. of Scotland was her appointed successor, he set out at once towards England, where he knew that if he could win access to the King, a door of preferment lay open before him. The story of his return is so admirably told by Izaak Walton that it is here set down entire: "When King James came into England he found, amongst other of the late Queen's officers, Sir Edward, who was afterwards Lord Wotton, Comptroller of the House, of whom he demanded, *If he knew one Henry Wotton, that had spent much time in foreign travel?* The Lord replied, he knew him well, and that he was his brother: then the King asking where he then was, was answered, at Venice or Florence; but by late letters from thence, he understood he would suddenly be at Paris. *Send for him*, said the King, *and when he shall come into England, bid him repair privately to me.* The Lord Wotton, after a little wonder, asked the King *If he knew him?* to which the King answered, *You must rest unsatisfied of that till you bring the gentleman to me.* Not many months after this discourse the Lord Wotton brought his brother to attend the King, who took him in his arms, and bade him welcome by the name of Ottavio Baldi, saying, *he was the most honest, and therefore the best dissembler that ever he met with, and said, Seeing I know you neither want learning, travel, nor experience, and that I have had so real a testimony of your faithfulness and abilities to manage an embassy, I have sent for you to declare my purpose; which is to make use of you in that kind hereafter.*' Old Izaak has described this truly characteristic and genuinely Jacobean welcome with a vividness which leaves nothing to be desired, and the reader seems to see perhaps with an irrepressible shudder the open-armed and certainly not dry-lipped Solomon, whose effusive salutation ended so favourably for Wotton.¹

The general line of his observations on the Continent would seem to show that Wotton had long looked upon the post of ambassador as one for the exercise of which he was fully fitted by the patient preparation of at least

¹ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, pp. xix., xx.

thirteen years spent at home and abroad. He had narrowly examined the political relations of the various Courts of Europe, and it was not natural that he should recognise his own limitations and his inability to grapple with serious diplomatic problems. Like many learned men, he imagined that the mere accumulation of materials was a sufficient preparation for their correct subsequent arrangement in an ordered policy, and he failed to see that the builder is neither always nor usually an architect of first-rate skill. Any patient student, who will consult his *State of Christendom* and his surviving despatches, will be forced to the conclusion, that, in spite of his fine presence, his undoubted talent and his great linguistic ability, he was not fitted for the conduct of embassies where supreme diplomatic power was required. He could perceive and relate with much piquancy events which were taking place around him; but he was not endowed with the power of correct co-ordination, or with that accurate discernment of underlying motives which must always be the equipment of the successful diplomatist. Moreover, he had an awkward habit of being "instant out of season," which caused no small trouble to his royal master on more than one occasion. He could not snatch the right moment for wise insistence, and for the no less necessary art of giving way with discretion when the pressure of events was too strong for him. So he played his ambassadorial part with a mixture of small triumphs and considerable defeats. That this is no unjust estimate of his powers in this kind will be abundantly demonstrated in the following pages, which will endeavour to extenuate nothing and to give credit where credit is legitimately due.

Wotton received the honour of knighthood at this his first interview, and the choice was given to him of embassies to France, Spain, or Venice. Of these he was wise enough to choose the last, out of prudent regard for his own narrow means and the splendour required either at Paris or at Madrid.¹ On July 19th, 1604,² he set sail for Calais, and hoped to reach Venice within thirty-five days, if he had good speed and no interruptions in his journey. Dr. Donne wrote an extraordinary, but neither a supremely rhythmical nor easily intelligible poem of con-

¹ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, p. xx.

² Winwood, *Memorials of English Affairs*, Vol. II. pp. 24, 25.

gratulation to his old friend just before his departure, which, being overloaded with the conceits¹ so dear to that rather barren age, would no doubt be received with great satisfaction by its hero. With much insight into character Wotton took with him as his chaplain William Bedell, a man of rare learning, who afterwards became the saintly Bishop of Kilmore and Ardagh, the latter of which he resigned from his inability to do justice to a double diocese. For his secretary he selected his dearly-loved nephew, Sir Albertus Morton, and was thus able to introduce to the King's notice that brilliant and accomplished young man. Whether he succeeded in reaching his destination as soon as he had expected may well be doubted, and his biographer does not help to decide the question from his genial indifference to chronology, a vice which, it must be confessed, would be exasperating in any less delightful author. But Isaak Walton could afford to leave alone the dry bones of history, so skilled was he in making his heroes appear in flesh and blood. If, however, any judgment can be formed from his later practice of leisurely travel, it may be well imagined that Wotton lingered with great enjoyment in the places of his youthful journeys, and that he received a warm welcome from the old friends who now saw him progressing in state, whom they had once seen put to the shifts of a needy but not niggardly scholar.

On his way to Venice he halted at Augsburg to visit one of his friends, Christopher Fleckmore, on whose behalf he committed a grave indiscretion, which almost cost him the favour of James when it came to light six years later. When Wotton was asked to write a *bon-mot* in his friend's Album he was at once ready to comply. It is interesting in passing to note the venerable origin of those bachelors' torments which are now the somewhat vapid treasures of the gentler sex alone. Wotton's contribution was more pointed than prudent, and consisted of "a pleasant definition of an ambassador." He wrote, "*Legatus est vir bonus peregre missus ad mentiendum reipublicæ causa*," which Walton thus adequately renders, "An ambassador is an honest man sent to *lie* abroad for the good of his country." When this more truthful than convenient definition was brought home to him at a later period, Wotton argued that he had used the word *lie* in

¹ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, pp. xxi., xxii.

an ambiguous sense, of which, however, the Latin is incapable, as the King justly perceived, when he insisted upon an apology.¹ That a responsible official should have suffered so damaging a witticism to have left his lips, to say nothing of writing it down, is but one proof among many that saving tact was not one of its author's virtues. He might have been sure that it would come to the light some time or other, and that, too, at a most inconvenient time. The saying itself created much amusement from its comparative truthfulness, and it was handed about from one to another until it was finally engraved on a window by an indiscreet admirer of its sharp point.

But for the present Wotton's definition slumbered in his friend's Album, and in due course he arrived at Venice, where he found himself joyfully received by the Doge Leonardo Donato.² He possessed the inestimable advantage of being able to deliver the salutation of his King and the purport of his embassy in flowing and elegant Italian, a fact which was enough in itself to win him great admiration and general approval. Probably this was the first occasion upon which he had seen the Council of Ten in session assembled, and his stately presence and high breeding could not fail to favourably impress the authorities of the still powerful but now declining Republic. Furthermore, he had arrived at an opportune time for himself and the State. James, whom he gracefully and ably represented, was looked upon by Europe as the champion of Protestantism against the Pope, being, in fact, the most powerful of the Protestant monarchs of his period. He could, therefore, be relied upon to support any power with diplomatic aid, if not with armed assistance, which was struggling against the unwarranted aggression of the Holy See. It was not that the Venetians at the moment wished to throw off all allegiance to Roman Catholicism, but they were engaged in a fierce conflict with the Pope, about certain long-established privileges which they claimed almost as their birthright. Clement VIII. had died, and Paul V., his *Legatus a latere*, was elected by the College of Cardinals to succeed him. Paul was a strong man, who was filled with the largest ideals of the Papal supremacy in political as well as ecclesiastical matters over the children of the Holy See, whether Protestant or Catholic. When he looked around him he

¹ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, pp. xxii., xxiii. ² *Idem ibidem*, pp. xxviii., xxix.

found that early in 1605 the contumacious Venetians had dared to pass a decree forbidding any layman to bequeath lands or goods to the Church. Their reason was that the charity of the laity tended to increase the numbers of the clergy beyond all fitness, and so to hamper the Government with difficulties arising from the immunity of the priesthood from civil trials.

But the sturdy citizens had even gone further than this piece of audacity: with more justice than prudence, they had brought to trial two religious men, so-called, Scipio Sanazin, Canon of Vicenza, and Count Brandolin Valde-marino, Abbot of Nervesa, who had committed crimes too revolting and flagrant to be passed over by the Council of Ten. The Pope was greatly exasperated by what he esteemed an act of unwarranted aggression upon his ecclesiastical authority, and he at once menaced the state of Venice with threats of excommunication. The Venetians resisted, as well they might, knowing by bitter experience that the Holy See had a wondrous aptitude for covering the sins of its wandering lambs. The head and inspiration of their resistance was the famous Pietro Sarpi, who, on taking orders as a Servite Friar, took also the name of Fra Paolo, by which he is best known. Appointed Consultative Theologian to the State on January 26th, 1605, he warmly espoused the side of his country in the quarrel, and wrote many books to disprove the power of the Pope to launch the thunders of excommunication against individuals or states. His temerity was punished by excommunications often repeated, which had no effect upon his sturdy soul, and more than one dastardly attempt was made by Papal commands to assassinate him.¹ Baronius and Bellarmine were his principal controversial opponents; but Fra Paolo's wit and learning, aided by the unique gifts of Bedell, Wotton's chaplain, were more than a match for the leaden logic of the one and the keen though not overscrupulous scholarship of the other. So marked indeed were the famous Venetian's gifts of argument that the Pope was constrained to close the wordy war for fear lest he should get the worst of the matter.

Wotton now saw an opportunity of detaching Venice from her allegiance to Rome; but by an indiscreet absurdity, if our authorities are to be trusted, he failed to make use of his golden opportunity at the opportune

¹ *Biographie Universelle*, sub Clement VIII., Paul V. and Sarpi.

moment. In the spring of 1606 Paul proceeded from threats to action, and he laid the Republic of Venice under an Interdict. But the falling of the ecclesiastical thunderbolt by no means dismayed the Venetians, who replied by driving the Jesuits out of their city, and by commanding the rest of the clergy to conduct divine service as usual. In every respect they showed themselves as stubborn in resistance as did his Holiness in insistence, and so that fierce controversy arose which soon drew upon Venice the interested observation of most of the European powers. The Protestants eagerly strove to sunder Venice from Roman supremacy, while the Catholics vainly endeavoured to reduce the Pope to reason and to patch up the rent in the robe of mother Church. Fra Paolo, who at least had Protestant leanings, held the right end of the rod of argument, which he laid upon the smarting shoulders of his opponents with uncompromising severity and hearty good will. As has been hinted, he made a confidant of Bedell, and used the English scholar's learning to aid him in dealing his controversial stripes.¹ If Burnet² is to be trusted, which is by no means axiomatic, it was early in 1607 that Wotton lost a favourable opportunity of weaning Venice from the Holy See. James had bidden him do his utmost to achieve this desirable end by laying controversial books on the Protestant side before the Council of Ten, with a special preference for his own *Premonition to all Christian Princes and States*, which was probably at this time merely in the form of a Latin manuscript. Some fantastic scruple prevented Wotton from using such an opportunity as never came again ; he wished, it is said, to present the treatise upon the first of May, which is consecrated to St. James. But by the mediation of France the Pope and the Venetians had come to terms as early as the twenty-first of April, in which his Holiness got the shell and his opponents the kernel of the victory. That Wotton could have allowed such a piece of folly to influence his judgment at such a moment clearly betrays his diplomatic incapacity.

It was during this year (1607) that Wotton had an

¹ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, pp. xxiv.-xxvii.

² Burnet, *Life of Bedell* (1685), pp. 12-14. Dr. Ward (p. 65) tries to represent this action of Wotton's as wise and opportune ; but careful readers of the whole matter at issue will be more inclined to agree with Burnet's unsparing condemnation.

opportunity of attempting to oblige a neighbouring Republic, at the expense, perhaps, of some little chivalry. Alessandro Antelminelli, who, upon the torture and execution of his father and his brothers for treason against the State of Lucca, had changed his name to Amerigo Salvetti, and who passed for a Florentine, was chased over Europe by the agents of his birthplace. For some time, upon his earlier visit to the Continent, Wotton and his brother Edward's son had travelled in company with the distinguished traitor. But Salvetti had found a final refuge in England; whereupon the Government of Lucca sent a demand to Wotton to surrender the fugitive to justice. Negotiations were at once opened between the Republic and the ambassador, to whom Francesco Tegrini, a wealthy citizen, was sent to treat. Wotton was one of those diplomats who refuse to give something for nothing, and he promptly demanded an exchange of traitors. An interesting account of these negotiations, which came to an end at the beginning of June, 1607, to the satisfaction of neither party, has been preserved. Sir Robert, calling himself the Earl of Dudley, with a certain Captain Elliot, was residing under the protection and with the help of a pension from the Archduke of Tuscany. Wotton demanded his extradition in exchange for that of Salvetti. The failure of this scheme was due to no lack of skill on his part, as may be seen from the fact that their patron was forced to send Dudley and Elliot out of Pisa, in order to enable them to escape from the greedy claws of James's vengeance. Disappointed as he was of his prey, the English ambassador refused to prosecute the delivery of Salvetti to the Government of Lucca, who thus escaped a punishment, which may have been his due, by a happy accident. Wotton had no twinges of conscience in proposing to give up a former fellow-traveller, with whom he seems to have entered into some degree of intimacy. But if his conduct appear unchivalrous, it must be admitted that he did his duty, and that the conscience of diplomacy must not be measured by the ordinary standards of right and wrong.¹

During his residence at Venice, Wotton kept up a correspondence with Prince Henry, whose greeting he had borne to the Council of Ten in 1604.² He was on terms of considerable intimacy with this bright and noble prince, to

¹ *Historical MSS., Commission Report XI.*, Part I. pp. 1 and 174-183.

² Birch, *Life of Prince Henry* (1760), p. 47.

whom he wrote frequently during the year 1608. One of his letters contains a full description of numerous foreign matches, which had taken, or were soon to take, place, and concludes with the words, "Fear not, sir, there will be left for you a good wife, I warrant you; and whatsoever she be, she will be glad of it."¹ In another letter he recommended to the Prince Signor Marc Antonio Correro,² the son of the Venetian ambassador at London, and gave a description of twenty-four ancient families in Venice. The same year he was busily engaged in supplying the Earl of Salisbury with varied information concerning the state of Europe,³ in so far as he could correctly obtain it from his corner of the Adriatic. The few letters to him from the cautious Secretary, which survive, indicate an unusual degree of confidence and intimacy as subsisting between the two men. So close indeed was their friendship, that Wotton was duly warned of one Simon Willis, a discredited and dismissed secretary of the great minister. Whether Salisbury profited by the information thus obtained cannot now be traced; but his invariable caution rendered him likely to consider any matters reported to him by an accredited authority. Had he been in England, Wotton would certainly have benefited by the Secretary's countenance, and it can hardly be doubted that Salisbury often entertained James's curiosity with scraps of the ambassador's letters.

The same year, too, the famous, or infamous Gaspar Schopp,⁴ who translated his name into Scioppius when he was received into the Church of Rome, found his way through Europe to Venice. Here he had several interviews with Fra Paolo, in which he was so insistent, not to say insolent, to the eminent Servite, that he was promptly clapped into prison. Scioppius had studied at Altdorf, though at a later period than Wotton, and he had become one of the most brilliant Latinists, as well as one of the most accomplished revilers, in Europe. On his conversion—or perversion, should it be called?—to Popery, he did not refrain from befouling the nest from which he had taken his adventurous flight; and men of such mark as Scaliger and Casaubon suffered from his biting sarcasm and his unscrupulous abuse. Wotton himself, as will appear in

¹ Birch, *Life of Prince Henry* (1760), pp. 99, 100.

² *Idem*, pp. 114–116.

³ *Sidney Papers*, Vol. II. pp. 326, 327.

⁴ *Biographie Universelle* and *Bayle*, sub Scioppius.

its place, was destined to experience some estrangement of James's affections, because of one of the libellous productions of this bitter but supremely distinguished scholar. Scioppius did not take orders, but received several empty titles from the Pope, who admired the subtlety of his arguments, while he despised the character of the man. It is needless to give any further description of his life, which was a roving season of extreme danger and uncommon excitement, in which he twice at least narrowly escaped from deliberate assassination at the hand of emissaries of the British ambassadors in Venice and Spain, since it has little bearing upon Wotton's career. It will be sufficient to say that his restless spirit found its final rest at Padua, on November 19, 1649; and he left none to regret him either amongst Catholics or Protestants, so ferocious had been his attacks on each in support of the other. On June 24, 1609, that eccentric genius, Tom Coryate, arrived at Venice, where he met with hospitable entertainment from Lord Wentworth, and was moderately received by Wotton, to whom he had been introduced by a familiar quotation, "Good wine needs no bush."¹ How much the two men saw of one another is not known; but they had little in common, and though the stately ambassador would be kind to his eccentric countryman, he cannot have greatly appreciated his visit.

In the main Wotton showed himself a sagacious maintainer of the interests of his country at Venice, a post of moderate importance, for which he was admirably fitted. But more than once even here he is found to have been wanting in diplomatic tact and standing upon his master's dignity, when it would have been wiser to sit in silence. He had already lost the most favourable moment of presenting to the Council of Ten one at least of James's theological treatises, for which happy accident they may have had reason to be thankful. When, however, the *Premonition*, accompanied by the re-issue of the *Apology for the Oath of Allegiance*, reached him, he was anxious to have these tracts freely published throughout the do-

¹ Coryate, *Crudities* (1611), pp. 157-291. Dr. Ward, in a note (p. 21), remarks that Coryate "*had*" on a similar occasion been, to his natural annoyance, introduced as *a very honest poor wretch*." It was not until 1617 that Coryate received the letter containing these words from Sir Thomas Roe. The word *had*, which must refer to the past, is therefore inexact.

minions of the Republic. Now the *Apology* was directed against two Bulls of Paul, forbidding Catholics to take the oath of allegiance to a Protestant Prince, and had made its first appearance soon after the Gunpowder Treason. In October, or a month earlier, 1609, the book reached Venice: hence the Venetian Government, which had already made its peace with the Pope, refused to grant Wotton's request. This natural course of procedure he "took so tenderly, as thereupon he charged them with a breach of amity with His Majesty, and declared unto them, that in respect thereof, he could no longer exercise his charge in the quality of a public minister among them. This protestation of his was found so strange by that state, as they sent hither in great diligence to understand whether His Majesty would avow him therein; which did very much trouble him to make a cleanly answer thereto for the salving of the ambassador's credit, who is censured to have prosecuted the matter to an over-great extremity."¹ That Wotton exceeded even the vain King's theological vanity in pressing a somewhat unnecessary point is sufficiently manifest, and the circumstance itself serves as a conclusive proof of his deficiency in that saving tact which is the salient characteristic of ambassadors of the first rank. He was endowed with a scholar's keenness of observation, but was seldom able to put the results of his observation to a profitable or practical use; in short, he was rather a shrewd observer of political winds than a shaper of diplomatic currents.²

¹ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. pp. 77, 78. Dr. Ward, in reliance on "the workers of the *Dictionary of National Biography*," has omitted this very pertinent circumstance, which could not fail to have modified his views of the capacity of Wotton as an ambassador.

² *Sidney Papers*, Vol. II. p. 325, where James's letter to Salisbury on the same theme runs thus:—"My littil Beagle. I have bene this Night surprysed by the Venetian Ambassadoure, who, for all my Hunting, hathe not spaired to hunt me out heir: To be shorte, his chiefe Errande was to tell me of a great Fraye in Venice betwixte my Ambassadoure thaire, and that Staite, anent the Prohibicion, that the Inquisition of Venice hathe sett foorth against the Publishing of my Booke thaire. He hathe complained that my Ambassadoure takis this so hoatlie, as passeth on Disorder. He hath bestowid an Houris vehement Oration upon me for this Purpose. My Answer was, that I could never dreame, that ather the State of Venice, wolde ever give me any juste Cause of Offence, or yett thatt ever my Ambassadoure thaire, wolde do thaim any evill Office; but as to give him any particulaire Ansoure, I tolde him I must first heare from my own Ambassadoure, for he knew well enewgh that everie Prince or State, must have a greate Truste in thaire own

But Wotton's term of office at Venice was drawing to a close, and at the end of 1609, or at the beginning of 1610,¹ he received his recall, possibly at his own request, since he found debts pressing upon him. He never hurried himself upon his return journeys, and on this occasion he spent some time loitering about Paris, where he was presented at Court.² By the end of February, 1610, he arrived in London,³ and finding the King gone upon a hunting expedition to Royston, he at once followed him thither. He was received with great favour, and his spirits, which had been depressed by debt, were exalted by the hope of future profitable employment. His successor, Sir Dudley Carleton, who may have been jealous of Wotton, and who was certainly an abler diplomatist, was appointed on July 25th, 1610, and he arrived at Venice near the end of November the same year.⁴ Carleton had the most unfavourable opinion of his predecessor's truthfulness, and in his confidential letters to John Chamberlain and *vice versâ* are many expressions of animosity and contempt levelled at Wotton under the spiteful nickname of Signor Fabritio.⁵ Whatever may be the truth of these damaging criticisms, they are far too numerous to be lightly neglected in any impartial survey of their subject, and there can be little doubt that Wotton presented him-

Ministers. I only write this unto you now, that in Case this Pantalone come unto you, ye may give him the lyke deferring Ansoure; albeit, if I shoulde tell you my Conscience, if all this Mannis Tale be trewe, my Ambassadoure hathe usid this Matter with a littel more fervent Zeale, then temperate Wisdome, I now hoape to heare from you the Assurance that your Sonne is well, and so fair well. *James R.*" Amidst the eccentricities of the royal orthography, it is quite clear that James felt that Wotton had at least outrun the limits of discretion in the matter at issue, and the easy-going King was much puzzled to devise a plan of accommodation. This letter alone would show that Wotton, who could be discreet in matters of trifling import, failed to perceive the necessity of gracefully yielding to the force of the inevitable.

¹ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 107. ² *Idem ibidem*, p. 256.

³ Birch, *Court and Times of James I.*, Vol. I. p. 111.

⁴ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. pp. 226, 236 and 220.

⁵ Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I. pp. 192, 193: "Signor Fabritio, after five or six days' loitering about this town, is gone towards the King with his *pictures and projects*." This is Chamberlain's contemptuous remark in a letter to Carleton. Cf. pp. 153, 199, and 163, where Wotton is accused of *walking off with a rich sword* by a convenient mistake. Cf. p. 209, where he is asserted "to never leave off his old trade of being *fableur*, or, as the devil is, father of lies." Cf. Vol. II. p. 27, and many other places in this useful and apparently accurate book, where the foregoing and similar charges are freely made.

self to some of his struggling rivals as a vain and ambitious man, who was not always truthful in his dealings with his competitors.

But if it be granted that Carleton and Chamberlain have maligned Wotton from jealousy, nothing will excuse his wanton neglect of Casaubon, when the great French scholar arrived at his last refuge in England. Casaubon, as has been said, had shown great kindness to him at the period of his sorest need, and he naturally expected that, come what would, he had one friend in his adopted country. He had travelled from Paris in the train of Sir Henry's eldest brother, Lord Wotton, who had been ambassador-extraordinary at the Court of France, and who had shown him much kindness and courtesy.¹ When, then, Casaubon arrived in London, towards the close of October, 1610, where his old friend had preceded him by some months, he found that Wotton knew him no longer. Writing, a little more than a year afterwards, to De Thou, he complains, "This (Sir Henry Wotton), a man of the greatest learning, twenty years ago lived with me at Geneva, and from that date we maintained our friendship by correspondence. As soon as we came hither, I from France, he from Venice, *I have ceased to be known to him*; nay, he has given no answer to my letter, nor know I if he intends to do so."² This touching sentence throws a most unamiable light upon Wotton's recollection of former friends, when their presence was calculated to hinder rather than to help his rise in the world. When he was at Geneva, Casaubon had been of great service to him; but when his old host was in London, it was his turn to serve. The coolness appears to have lasted until Casaubon's death, in 1614. It may, of course, be urged by those ingenious advocates who are ready to gloss over palpable faults in the object of their eulogistic whitewash, that to have helped Casaubon might have injured himself. But a true friend is not the man to shrink from inconvenience, and even from danger, if he can serve one whom he really loves.

But Wotton was too busily engaged in pushing his

¹ *Casaubonorum Epistolæ*, Ep. DCXCI. pp. 361, 362.

² *Idem*, Ep. DCCCXLI p. 506: "Hic . . . vir doctissimus, ante annos xx mecum Genevæ vixit; et ex eo tempore litteris amicitiam coluimus. Postquam ego e Galliis, ille Venetiis huc convenimus, desii illi notus; meæ quoque epistolæ responsum dedit nullum, an sit daturus nescio."

own fortunes at Court to pay much heed to the possible troubles of his once-valued benefactor. He had found the meagre portion of a younger brother far too small for his requirements; he had run into debt on his embassy in the King's service, and had found that James, though a liberal giver, was a most unwilling paymaster of what he actually owed. Moreover, he had always one strong claim upon James's attention, who remembered Ottavio Baldi, and he was appointed ambassador to Charles Emmanuel, Archduke of Savoy, on January 29th, 1611, whither he set out at the beginning of June.¹ It seems certain that Wotton was sent in quest of a wife for Prince Henry, who had positively refused to match himself with a French or a Spanish Princess. He took with him certain selected jewels from the Tower, a gift which would be likely to charm a foreign princess. It would seem natural to suppose that the bride elect, if the negotiations were successful, would be expected to change her religion, to accommodate herself to the wishes of a powerful prince, who had said that "the two religions, as far as he was concerned, should never lie in one bed." During his absence the Lord Treasurer fell ill, and Wotton's name was freely suggested as his probable successor.² His present visit to Savoy was of the shortest, and by November 13th he was back again in London, keeping alive his interest with Prince Henry and his train. At this time he is reported to have been entrusted with the narration of the quarrel between the Venetians and the Pope,³ of which he had been a witness, a work which, according to custom, he never finished. Having refused particular employment at Brussels, perhaps on account of his unfamiliarity with the language, he set out again for Savoy on the eighteenth of March, 1612, taking with him rich presents for the Archduke, and with instructions to complete the business of his former embassy. While he was absent the Earl of Salisbury fell ill, and Wotton's name was in every one's mouth as a candidate for the Secretaryship, should it fall vacant. His old friends at Turin gave him a great reception, and

¹ Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I. pp. 134, 135. Cf. *Reliquiæ*, p. 400, where he is said to have been in London so late as April 2nd, 1611, possibly preparing for his mission.

² Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I. pp. 137, 138.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 145.

he was treated with like courtesy and rich gifts on his departure in July in the same year.¹

On his return Wotton experienced the greatest danger with which he had ever come into contact. In 1611 the ever-restless Scioppius, who had been in Germany and chanced upon the famous definition of an ambassador, published his book, the *Ecclesiasticus*, in which he used the authority of one of James's own ambassadors to prove that the Protestant champion sent them forth with the direct object of lying. The book, which reflected with great severity upon the King of France, did not, however, reach Paris and the hangman's fire until November, 1612, and a few days later it suffered the same well-merited fate in London. James had already noticed the violent little work in October, and he fell desperately foul of Wotton for his share in producing the libel by his unseasonable jest of so many years ago. Indeed, the once favourite ambassador appeared to be "down the wind," and his numerous rivals were eagerly seeking to step into his shoes. But on December 2nd, 1612, he wrote his amusing and witty letter to Marcus Welser, of Augsburg, in which he won pardon, though not immediate employment.² He spent the interim in haunting the ambassador of Savoy in London, and in beginning his history of the *State of Venice* and apparently in completing his *Parallel between the Earl of Essex and the Duke of Buckingham*. Of this sketch it may be fairly said that it displays in highly attractive fashion the romantic and picturesque figure of Elizabeth's unhappy favourite, whose brief story is told in flowing, witty, and elegant English.³

¹ Birch, *James I.*, Vol. II. pp. 153, 163, 177, 181, 183. Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. pp. 353, 354 and 367. Thus the two embassies to Savoy, mentioned in the Preface to the *State of Christendom*, are seen to have taken place at the very time at which Dr. Ward (pp. 73-76) represents Wotton as being in disgrace. The dates as given by Birch and Winwood are conclusive on this important matter, and as far as we have been able to test them they have been found correct. Indeed, at no other period of his life is there any room for these embassies, as we know his whereabouts during most of the years between 1611 and his retirement from diplomatic service in the year 1623.

² Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. p. 407. Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I. pp. 201, 214, 215. *Reliquiæ*, immediately after the *Life*.

³ Winwood, *Memorials*, Vol. III. pp. 432, 461, 469. Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I. pp. 243, 260, 261, 301, and 311. The chronology of this period of Wotton's life is involved in much perplexity; but there can be no question that Dr. Ward's account is confused and incorrect (pp. 73-78). He appears to take Wotton's retirement from Venice as due to the book of

Wotton had now no diplomatic employment for upwards of two years; but that does not seem to have been due to his temporary disgrace, but because he had heard some of the rumours about his chance of being appointed to one of the chief offices of State, and he thus wished to push his fortunes at home. He may have had some minor post about the Court, from which he derived scanty means of sustenance, for which his paternal income would give him but an inadequate supply. He was in Parliament, representing the borough of Hastings, during the year 1614, where he strove to make a favourable impression. On May 5th, 1614, there was a hot debate on the King's power of levying *Impositions*, in which the majority of the Lower House was opposed to the royal prerogative on this point. On May 12th the matter for a conference with the Lords was discussed, but the Lords refused to confer, and on May 21st there was a set debate in the Commons on the same fruitful theme. Sir Roger Owen headed the opposition, and a certain Mr. Jones made a powerful speech in opposition to the King's side of the argument. When he had done, Sir Henry Wotton saw his opportunity, and he arose and delivered a courtly harangue. "He had conceived some doubts, which troubled his understanding, which concerned Sir Roger Owen's part. We had a King *patientissimus vere*. In his zeal of the cause he wished two things: 1. That Sir Roger Owen might be ranked in the first orders; 2. That Sir Roger Owen might look well upon the ground he trod. This would prove true, that the power of *imposing* belonged not to elective princes, but successive. The Emperor could not *impose*, but in the Imperial Diets. The King of Poland *imposed* not also, but so. In Italy every small prince *imposed* upon what he pleased. The King of Spain *imposed* not in the kingdom of Arragon, where they said at his coronation, *We as great as you, make you king, to rule us according to our laws*. In Castile, where he had the crown freely, he *imposed* freely. In France

Scioppius, whereas we have seen that he was engaged in two embassies to Savoy before that book reached England. Nay, more, we know that Wotton arrived in England two years before the advent of the *Ecclesiasticus*. Nor is there any sound reason to ascribe his non-employment as ambassador to anything other than to his own desire to obtain congenial employment at home. He could not have been in disgrace in 1613-1614, or he would not have been *servant* to Princess Elizabeth, nor would he probably have been in Parliament.

the king *imposed*, as the last king had done, by *imposing* upon salt and so getting £14,800,000. And Henry IV. *imposed* necessity upon every house to buy salt. A prince, that did come in by descent, had greater power than an elective. For himself he bore so great a zeal to the public as he would pardon whosoever should answer his objections.”¹

The force of Wotton's contention was felt by the House, and his line of argument could not fail to be pleasant to James. Sir Roger Owen replied to him; Sir Thomas Roe and Sir Dudley Digges followed on the same side, and Mr. Secretary Lake shuffled. But when Lake and Wotton were proposed as additional members of the special committee, which had already been appointed to consider the whole question, they were not accepted as suitable persons. On May 25th, 26th, and 27th the debate raged round a point of privilege, which had been raised by a courtly speech of Bishop Williams to the King, who was so little pleased with the conduct of the House that on June 3rd he dissolved the Parliament.² It was during this debate that John Hoskins made his unfortunate allusion to the Sicilian Vespers,³ which cost him his liberty for a considerable time. Possibly, too, during the same discussion Wotton so fiercely attacked Sir John Savile that he narrowly escaped being called before the Bar of the House.⁴ Thus his conduct in Parliament was likely to be more pleasing to the Court than to his constituents, and though he had every quality to make him a distinguished Parliamentary, he was never again elected to serve his country in that capacity. In the previous year he had been with the king on one of his progresses to Cambridge,⁵ where he had seen a tilting-match, and listened with critical attention to the speeches which were made before James. He greatly enjoyed his visit to the University, and he has left a lively description thereof in one of his letters to Sir Edmund Bacon. He could not then have been in disgrace at a time during which he was moving about with the Court, and of which he gives no hint in his letters.

It was in 1613 that he attached himself to Princess

¹ *Commons Journals*, pp. 472-474, 481-483, 492, 493, 496-498, 498-500.

² *Idem*, p. 500. ³ *Reliquiæ*, p. 435.

⁴ Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I. p. 322.

⁵ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 405, 406.

Elizabeth in the capacity of her *servant*, at the unusually late age of forty-five. To her he was loyal in good repute and in evil, and it was his habit to write to her every week, though but few of his letters have been preserved. Some few years afterwards he appears to have addressed to her his justly celebrated lyric, which has given him a seat on the Muses' Hill for all time :—

“ You meaner beauties of the night,
That poorly satisfy our eyes
More by your number than your light,
You common people of the skies;
What are you, when the sun shall rise?

You curious chanters of the wood,
That warble forth Dame Nature's lays,
Thinking your voices understood
By your weak accents; what's your praise
When Philomel her voice shall raise?

You violets, that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known,
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own;
What are you when the rose is blown?

So when my mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty of her mind,
By virtue first, then choice, a queen,
Tell me, if she were not design'd
Th' eclipse and glory of her kind.”¹

That this little poem is worthy alike of its beautiful theme and of its author but few will deny; its dainty lines are laid together with a subtle music and a finished delicacy not easily surpassed in their kind, and they are redolent of a sincerity of affection, which continued to breathe in Wotton's soul until death interrupted his earthly song. The ill-fated marriage between the heroic Princess and the feeble Elector Palatine of the Rhine, whose conspicuous ineptitude destroyed himself and his high-spirited wife, and set on fire that fatal Thirty Years' War, which cut off some of the noblest in Europe, was celebrated amid national rejoicings. But the joy was short-lived, and Wotton remained staunch to his mistress in sunshine

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 380, 381. Dr. Ward (p. 79) dates this service wrongly, or rather he mistakes Wotton's age when he undertook it, which he sets down as *fifty-five*. Seeing that Wotton was born in 1568, and the date of his service was 1613, he could not have been more than *forty-five* at the time. Walton (*Reliquiæ, Life*, p. xxxiii.) does not give the period at which it was undertaken.

and in shadow, and once at least he endeavoured to serve her in a more substantial manner than by the penning of dainty lyrics.¹

During this period of mingled place-hunting and literary occupations, Wotton was witness of the imprisonment of Sir Thomas Overbury for contempt of the royal authority, and he judiciously prophesied that the prisoner would return to Court no more. In a letter to Sir Edmund Bacon² he gives a curious account of this circumstance, and in a further letter, dated May 27th, 1613, he remarks,³ "Sir Thomas Overbury not only out of liberty (as he was), but almost out of discourse." He did not know the systematic villainy which was being enacted against the unfortunate knight, which culminated in his murder on September 14/15, 1613, and which was only brought to light two years later. During November, 1613, the King was disposed to use Wotton for an embassy to France;⁴ but for some unknown reason he was not sent on this mission. It was at this point that he determined to sit in Parliament, and his conduct there has been already noted. But his life as a Member of the House of Commons was too short to further any plans of advancement, which he may have laid, by this means; and seeing no probability of employment at home in a suitable office, in July, 1614, a few weeks after the dissolution of the Parliament, he set out on an unwelcome and exceedingly distasteful mission. He was sent to the Low Countries to mediate between the rival claimants of the Duchies of Cleves, Juliers and Berg, for the possession of which the Count Palatine of Neuburg and the Elector of Brandenburg were the irrepressible competitors. The former, who had become a Catholic, was supported by Spinola in the interests of Spain; while the latter, who from a Lutheran had become a Calvinist, was supported by the States-General of Holland. The French ambassador was

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 336, *et passim*. It is, of course, possible that Wotton undertook his figment of chivalry at a later date, when he was upon one of his embassies, but this would not seem probable.

² *Reliquiæ*, pp. 408-414.

³ *Idem*, p. 420. Dr. Ward (p. 89) misquotes Wotton and makes him say that Overbury *was set at* not *out of* liberty, which is the exact opposite. Thus he repeats the old heresy of *Truth Brought to Light*, that Overbury was murdered in 1615, whereas the actual date was Sept. 14/15, 1613 (*State Trials*, Vol. II. p. 923).

⁴ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 429, 430.

joined with Wotton in the unprofitable task of arbitrating between those who had no intention of abiding by the award of the arbiters. A kind of peace was patched up during November, 1614; but by the middle of December the futility of the negotiations was perceived, and though the business hung fire until August 14th, 1615, nothing further was accomplished.¹

How greatly Wotton disliked both the place and the persons concerned in these negotiations may be seen from a letter which he wrote on June 7th, 1615, to Sir Edmund Bacon.² "But let me fall into a passion," he writes with some heat. "For what sin, in the name of Christ, was I sent hither among soldiers, being by my profession academical, and by my charge pacifical?" That he was out of his place amid the rumours of war and the disturbances of sieges must be evident to all who have studied the story of his life, and though he might find some pleasure in the sights of the cities in which he was sojourning, there can be no reasonable doubt that he felt not a little like a lamb amongst wolves. That he is not to be blamed for the failure of these negotiations must be freely admitted; had James been willing to fight, his ambassador might perhaps have been more successful. As it was, he sent him to achieve an impossible task, and with him must rest the responsibility for the ultimate fiasco. During the course of this embassy Wotton behaved himself with much dignity. When Count Hohensolem, the Emperor's ambassador, complained that he was not visited by the English ambassador, Wotton replied with calm prudence, "That he had not to say to him, until he received order from the King his master. That he was there to agree and compose, by amicable means, the difference between the two Princes, and that they had done it, if his legation did not hinder it; which, that he might preserve, he would truss up baggage, and retreat to make report unto his master."³ He took the same tone in a letter which he had occasion to write to the Marquis of Spinola on November 27th, 1614, in which he warned him of the danger of mocking James and holding the fortresses of the places in dispute in defiance of the undertaking made by the mediators and promised by the rival claimants.⁴ That

¹ Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I. pp. 333, 348, 353, 355.

² *Reliquiæ*, pp. 438, 439.

³ *Sidney Papers*, Vol. II. p. 333.

⁴ *Camden Society*, No. 12, pp. 466, 467.

he showed himself exclusive to his too curious fellow-countrymen may be seen in a letter from Sir John Throckmorton to Viscount Lisle, in which the writer complains of Wotton's reserve, and adds the words, "I hear he doth not over-trouble himself with too much kindness unto any."¹ That the ambassador showed himself discreet in his reserve cannot be denied, but Throckmorton's statement has some bearing upon Wotton's former treatment of Casaubon. Neither reserve nor prudence, however, served his turn, and he was compelled to come back with the disagreeable consciousness of total failure.

Next year he found a more congenial task in a second embassy to Venice, whither he set off on March 18th, 1616.² He travelled in his own leisurely and expensive fashion to the scene of his former happy employment, where he was received with great joy. While he was spending his time here in pleasant pursuits and in penning flowing but not very effective despatches to James, Secretary Winwood died, and again Wotton's name was mentioned as a possible and even probable successor.³ The frequency of these rumours points both to the popular estimate of his influence at Court, which was, however, materially weakened by the death of Prince Henry, and to the reason of his remaining two years at home after his second embassy to Savoy. But the examination of the results of his diplomacy does not warrant even the probability of his achievement of success in so important an office, and the careful critic is forced to the conclusion that he was better adapted to his less onerous duties at Venice than to the more arduous burden of directing the policy of England. As it was, he seems to have been able to induce the cautious Council of Ten to promise monetary help for the recovery of the Palatinate, and to send an actual sum to Count Mansfeld for that purpose. In 1618 he must have seen and rejoiced in the discomfiture of the infamous plot of the Spanish ambassador in conjunction with the Papal Nuncio to set the arsenal of Venice on fire and to seize upon the city.⁴ In spite of his petition for recall⁵ in 1618 upon private business, or at least for a five weeks'

¹ *Sidney Papers*, Vol. II. p. 333.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Vol. II. p. 45.

⁵ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 484, 485.

² Birch, *James I.*, Vol. I. p. 394.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, Vol. II. p. 75.

leave of absence, he was not actually suffered to return until the spring of 1619.¹

The last day of July, 1619, found Wotton once more in London, impoverished in purse and bankrupt in credit, his present hopes of a maintenance in the city shadowy, and all his future depending upon future preferment.² He at once set off to meet James at Woodstock, to tell his pitiful tale, to plead for his arrears and to give an account of his stewardship;³ but he found that the King had left his hunting-lodge on the previous day. But, in spite of his disappointment, he had not long to wait for employment, and he was sent upon the important mission, first, of seconding James Hay, Viscount Doncaster, in an attempt to persuade the German Princes to combine against Ferdinand, Emperor of Austria, and, next, to induce the latter to make peace on terms most unfavourable to himself. Wotton soon had to undertake the chief part in these negotiations, and he was entrusted with an impossible task. Had James been willing, as were his subjects, to draw the sword in defence of the rights or the wrongs of his son-in-law, something perhaps might have been done. But peace he would have and peace he had, to the ruin of his daughter and the degradation of his country. Towards the beginning of the winter of 1619 Wotton arrived at Munich,⁴ where the Elector of Bavaria, who was soon to be chief of the Catholic League, and who had been promised a large slice of the Palsgrave's dominions, put him off with fair words and evasive answers. Having failed to gain anything here but delusive expressions of simulated sympathy, he proceeded to Heilbrönn to consult the "Princes and States of the Union," where he received no better satisfaction. From Heilbrönn he journeyed during the first part of the year 1620 to the Duke of Lorraine, the Archduke Leopold, the town of Strassburg, the Duke of Würtemberg and the city of Ulm. But in each of these places, and by each of these potentates, he was treated with caution rather than with confidence, and he returned in August to Augsburg with the conviction that they were waiting for the result of a great battle between the Emperor and the Palsgrave before venturing to declare themselves.

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 282, 283.

² Birch, *Court and Times of James I.*, Vol. II. p. 184.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 186.

⁴ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 486-535.

His next place of sojourn was in the very den of lions—Vienna itself. The terms suggested for the settlement of all disagreements were wholly impracticable, and if they are Wotton's own, they do not suggest any profound diplomatic perception of the state of affairs. "1. That the Elector Palatine be contented to relinquish the title and possession of the Kingdom of Bohemia. 2. That the Emperor Ferdinand, according to the first election of the Bohemians, and by virtue thereof, shall enjoy the entire profits and title of the said crown during his natural life. 3. That after the decease of the said Emperor it shall be free for the Bohemians to choose what king they will, and much more to admit him, whom they have designed, namely, the Palatine Heir Apparent. 4. That for assuring the immunities of that people, and future freedom in the exercise of both religions, the Emperor be contented to commit the regiment of the said kingdom to the naturals thereof. 5. That of persons on each side banished, whether spiritual or civil, nothing be said till a full agreement about the rest."¹ That terms so favourable to his son-in-law would please James cannot be questioned; but that the Emperor could even listen to them temperately speaks much for his self-control. At an early stage in the proceedings news arrived of the total overthrow of the Palsgrave's forces at Prague. But Wotton did not abate a jot of his high terms, and he does not seem to have realized that the loss of James's friendship made but little impression upon Ferdinand's mind. The Emperor, who appears to have been charmed with the ambassador himself, returned an emphatic denial to any such conditions of peace, and regarding the Palsgrave as a rebel, he refused to listen to any terms which did not imply an unconditional submission on his part. Thus Wotton, who was totally unable to grapple with a diplomatic problem of such magnitude, saw the failure of his mission, partly on this account and partly because of the weakness of the cowardly Solomon, who vainly endeavoured to guide the destinies of his kingdom.²

It was probably before his retirement from Vienna that Bacon sent his kinsman a copy of his *Novum Organum* with a complimentary letter, to which Wotton replied with an account of some of Kepler's experiments

¹ *Reliquiæ*, p. 511.

² *Idem*, pp. 283-297; cf. especially pp. 498-508.

with a *camera obscura*.¹ Thus he found time to interest himself in the scientific discoveries around him, and no doubt his delight in such matters relieved the terrible strain of total failure. He was deeply attached to the cause of his mistress, the unhappy Queen of Bohemia, and he was even indiscreetly anxious to serve her. When he left Vienna, Ferdinand gave him a jewel of great price, which he presented to his hostess, the Countess of Sabrina, in recognition of her kindness to him. Such an insult inevitably reached the knowledge of the Emperor, and he was greatly angered. Wotton's reply to the imperial messenger does more credit to his heart than to his head. "Though he had received the jewel with great thankfulness," he said, "yet he found in himself an indisposition to be the better for any gift that came from an enemy of his royal mistress, the Queen of Bohemia; for so she was pleased he should always call her."² Such an answer could not but commend itself to the offended monarch, who could understand the single-hearted sincerity of the affection of the man, who was deeply conscious of his failure to serve her whom he honoured most on earth.

That Wotton proceeded straight on his third mission to Venice from Vienna would seem tolerably certain in or about December, 1620. "I am now preparing," he writes to Bacon, "my departing toward my other employment, for in my first instructions I had a power to go hence, when this controversy should be decided, either by treaty or by fortune; whereof now the worser means have perverted the better."³ Of this three years' embassy but few details survive; he laboured hard to induce the Government to take active steps to aid the shattered cause of James's children, whom that peaceful politician had abandoned to the rough blasts of fortune, while he was endeavouring to obtain a Spanish bride for his son Charles. He was in residence in Venice before February 25th, 1621,⁴ where he enjoyed the confidence of the Council of Ten in an unusual degree. But he was unsuccessful in his attempts to make them see that their cause was bound up with that of the Palsgrave. To all his entreaties they returned one answer: they had already contributed money for maintenance of four thousand men, they had pensioned the Count of Mansfeld, the commander of the forces of

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 298-302.

³ *Idem*, p. 301.

² *Idem (Life)*, pp. xxxii., xxxiii.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 536.

the Palsgrave, and they had promised to join the French king and Savoy in the attempt to wrest Rhetia from the Emperor. They were ready, furthermore, to stir up a revolt in the Swiss provinces of the Empire.¹ But they would do nothing more, nor indeed could anything more be expected from them. Despairing, therefore, of the cause which he had so much at heart, he spent his days in Venice in the congenial task of collecting art treasures for his friends, which, though in point of fact commissions, were taken as free gifts. Always interested in empirical science, he sent the King melon seeds to grow in his great gardens at Theobalds.² On one occasion he was able to save from the Inquisition an Englishman named Mole, who had incurred its displeasure by the circulation of copies of James's irrepressible *Apology*.³ Amongst the botanical specimens which he forwarded to the Earl of Holderness was the stem of a double yellow rose, a circumstance which shows that he had an eye for things beautiful in nature as well as in art.⁴ But he had little diplomatic work to do, and his days were spent in increased expenditure and the accumulation of that large harvest of debts which had been steadily ripening during all his journeys abroad.

Towards the close of 1623 Wotton returned to England, at the age of fifty-five. His younger brother's allowance had long since been made away, a heavy burden of debt weighed down his shoulders, and he had only delusive hopes to help him to fill an empty purse and a no less empty stomach.⁵ Somewhere about this time he wrote pathetically to the Duke of Buckingham, who was then supreme ruler over the King and Court, to help him in his hour of need. "After seventeen years," he complains with some bitterness, "of foreign and continual employment, either ordinary or extraordinary, I am left utterly destitute of all possibility to subsist at home; much like those seal-fishes which sometimes (as they say), oversleeping themselves in an ebbing water, feel nothing about them but a dry shore when they awake. Which comparison I am fain to seek among those creatures, not knowing among men, that have so long served so gracious a master, any one to whom I may resemble my unfortunate

¹ *Reliquiæ*, p. 541.

² *Idem*, pp. 313, 316, 317, *et passim*.

³ *Idem*, pp. 314-316.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 317.

⁵ Birch, *Court and Times of James I.*, Vol. II. p. 440.

bareness.”¹ The utter desolation of this appeal serves only to emphasize the pathetic position of a true and tried servant like Wotton in his old age in a Court where a handsome person counted for more than years of faithful toil. James, according to his wont, without troubling himself to consider how Wotton could subsist in the meantime, gave him the reversion of the Mastership of the Rolls, which was to be his when Sir Julius Cæsar should rise to the higher preferment of heaven. But posthumous liberality is but a poor provision for present needs, and Wotton could only wait and long.

On the nineteenth of April, 1623, by what gentle Izaak looked upon as a providential circumstance, Thomas Murray, Provost of Eton, who may have entertained a different view of the matter, died, after a brief illness.² It seems uncertain whether Wotton was at Venice or had just returned when this so-called providential event took place. But positive contemporary evidence points to the fact that he only arrived in London at the beginning of December of the same year.³ However that may be, the breath was no sooner out of the body of the late Provost than several competitors sprang up for the vacant office, which was worth £100 a year, in addition to a maintenance. Sir Albertus Morton, Lord Bacon, Sir Dudley Carleton, Sir William Becher, who had the powerful support of the Duke of Buckingham, and Secretary Naunton, were competitors for a place which would appear but a small piece of preferment. If, as Chamberlain asserts, Wotton returned to England no earlier than the close of November, 1623, he must have been in Venice when he made his application for the vacancy, or have entered into the competitions somewhat late. The latter supposition seems the more probable, both from the dilatory habits of the King and from the fact that he had already the promise of the Mastership of the Rolls when he became a candidate.⁴ In any case, he had not to wait long for a position which accorded with his own strongest

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 320, 321.

² Birch, *James I.*, Vol. II. pp. 386, 387.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 440. Chamberlain is writing to Carleton from London, and his letter, which speaks of Wotton as *just returned*, is dated December 6th, 1623. Murray's death was not, therefore, so providential as Walton asserts, since Wotton would have to conduct his candidature for the vacant post by proxy.

⁴ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, p. xxxv.

inclination. He surrendered his promised post to Sir William Becher, along with the smaller place at Court which had been his. This may have been that Clerkship of Chancery for which he petitioned the King, and which was claimed and possibly appropriated by Sir Julius Cæsar when he became Master of the Rolls.¹ By this surrender Wotton was able to free himself from the only dangerous candidate for the vacancy, and on July 24th, 1624, he was duly elected to fill a place especially suited to his peculiar gifts, and in the enjoyment of which he could look forward to a peaceful old age.²

Of the remainder of his tranquil life but little has been left by Izaak Walton to say, and none could paint a more delicate portrait of his hero than the gentle-hearted old angler. He had obtained what he most coveted—a well-earned and honest, but by no means inactive, retirement. The new Provost could not, however, rid himself of his debts without paying them; and debts have a habit of coming home to roost like the rooks to their ancestral elms. He was so poor on his entry of office that the Fellows of Eton had to furnish the bare walls of his chambers.³ He was under the additional necessity of paying the most pressing of his debts before he could actually enter upon his new duties, and he had to appeal to the King through the mediation of Nicholas Pey, Clerk of the Kitchen, for the sum of five hundred pounds, which was due to him probably for expenses incurred during his last embassy alone. His letter contains the following pathetic petition, which was successful: "It wrinkles my face," he wrote, "to tell you that my — will cost me £500; that done, my thoughts are at rest, and over my study door you shall find written, INVIDIÆ REMEDIUM."⁴ The blank may in part be filled in with the expenses of his installation, and in part with the payment of his more pressing debts. But, in spite of his success in obtaining this sum, Wotton never seems to have been able to cut the garment of his expenditure according to the scanty cloth of his income. On February 12th, 1628, he petitioned Charles for preferment, setting forth his services and his poverty. He begged the King to give him the next good

¹ *Reliquiæ*, p. 352.

² Birch, *James I.*, Vol. II. p. 440; cf. Harwood, *Alumni Etonenses*, pp. 12-15.

³ *Idem*, p. 15.

⁴ *Reliquiæ*, p. 359.

"deanery that shall fall vacant by death or remove."¹ That Wotton never succeeded in entirely clearing off his encumbrances is clearly shown by his will, in which as far as he could he made provision for the payment in full of what still remained owing.² There are other instances in his last letters of his need of money, and in 1637, not quite two years before he died, he put in a petition for the Mastership of the Savoy, in case Dr. Balcanqual, the then Master, were promoted to the Deanery of Durham.³ But it is needless to multiply such instances, and Wotton's debts were in the main covered by the money owed to him by a king who loved his ambassadors to make a brave show, but who was seldom ready to pay the piper, though he himself had called the tune.

Wotton's life at Eton may best be represented by his immortal poem, which sings with artless grace and unaffected sincerity the *Character of a Happy Life*:

"How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill.

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death;
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath.

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice hath ever understood;
How deepest wounds are giv'n by praise,
Nor rules of state, but rules of good.

Who hath his life from rumours freed,
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppression great.

Who God doth late and early pray,
More of His grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend.

That man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all."⁴

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 562-564.

² *Idem* (*Life*), pp. xlix., l. and lii.-liv.

³ *Idem*, pp. 340, 341.

⁴ *Idem*, pp. 383, 384.

That this poem, which was Ben Jonson's favourite,¹ though he was but an indifferent practitioner of its precepts, shows the storms through which Wotton had passed will be denied by no one. He had struggled to rise, and for a time had been a person of high consideration in the eyes of the Court and of the nation. But, in spite of glaring faults, he was a man of too honest a temper to be able to contend with the wiles of less scrupulous men. He may not have been free from reproach during his several embassies, nor in his treatment of Casaubon; but the "lusty winter of his age" stole quietly to its close in the calm atmosphere of Eton, where his chief trouble appears to have been his inability to gratify his friends by the election of boys in whom they were interested to the scholarships of the place.² Vexed as he was by the recollection of unpaid debts, for the most part his last years were spent in faithful service of the highest interests of learning and of the great school of which he was the diligent and able head.

His leisure moments were devoted to the diplomatic pursuit of angling, and his constant comrade in this exercise, Izaak Walton, says that had he lived he would have published a treatise upon his favourite sport. That this was one of Wotton's unfulfilled literary projects need cause no regret, since he left the field open for his biographer to produce one of the classics of the English language. The two friends often fished together in a bend of the Thames near to Eton, where perchance they may have caught the gaudy but tasteless barbel, and where they smoked their pipes together after they had partaken of their modest luncheon. Wotton has left a memory of one of these harmless excursions in a tiny idyll as delicate and lifelike in poetry as are the kindred pictures of Birket Foster in a sister art:

"And now all Nature seem'd in love,
The lusty sap began to move;
New juice did stir th' embracing vines,
And birds had drawn their valentines;

¹ *Conversations with Drummond*, Con. vii. Ben Jonson knew this in a form differing in some points from the one quoted above, which shows that the poem was handed about the Court in manuscript, and that it was written before Wotton had experienced the quiet of which it speaks.

² *Reliquiæ*, pp. 348, 355, 370 and 471.

The jealous trout, that low did lie,
 Rose at a well-dissembled fly;
 There stood my friend, with patient skill
 Attending of his trembling quill.

Already were the eaves possest
 With the swift pilgrim's daubed nest.
 The groves already did rejoice
 In Philomel's triumphing voice.

The showers were short, the weather mild,
 The morning fresh, the evening smiled.

Joan takes her neat-rubb'd pail, and now
 She trips to milk the sand-red cow;
 Where for some sturdy football swain
 Joan strokes a syllabub or twain.

The fields and gardens were beset
 With tulip, crocus, violet;
 And now, though late, the modest rose
 Did more than half a blush disclose.
 Thus all look'd gay, all full of cheer,
 To welcome the new-liveried year."¹

This poem presents a dainty picture of the stately Provost and the gentle Izaak on a spring morning, when occupied with their delightful pursuit; and every line shows what a keen eye Wotton possessed for the rural beauties of his native land. It may be that here and there are lines which smack of Rydal water, but for all that they are descriptive. In short, he was a poet who, with a deep and fervent power of devotion, was able to sing of lighter things with an artless simplicity which is in the highest degree refreshing, if it be compared with the struggling efforts of Donne's more laboured muse.

But Wotton busied himself with occupations of a graver kind than the gentle craft, though his head was at all times fuller of projects than his hand to carry them to completion. The first grief which disturbed his quiet at Eton was the untimely death of his brilliant and beloved nephew, Sir Albertus Morton, who had been promoted to the Clerkship of the Council, and for whom he mourned in deeply touching lines.² All the male representatives of his name had passed away before he entered into his rest, and there are traces throughout his letters of this period of a solitary sadness which welcomed death as a friend. But this loneliness of spirit did not prevent him from doing his duty with all his might. A perusal of the statutes of Eton showed him that he, as Provost, ought to take Holy Orders, and in 1627 he expressed his

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 384, 385.

² *Idem*, pp. 321, 322 and 388, 389.

intention of so doing to King Charles, who raised no objection. He followed out his purpose so far as to proceed to Deacon's Orders, a circumstance which renders his petitions for clerical preferment intelligible.¹ It is not for a moment suggested that hope of such preferment had anything to do with Wotton's decision; it was only bare need which induced him to ask for advancement of this kind. He devoted himself to the interests of the school with intelligent industry, and took especial care to bring forward bright and promising pupils. Once, when an old friend, seeing him come out of the chapel in his surplice, was minded to be facetious, he cited the example of Charles V., who retired from his throne to a cloister, and who then said with much contentment that he had now more time to meditate upon the goodness of God than busier men could find.² Nor did he forget his first chaplain and valued friend, William Bedell, when an opportunity of serving him arose, and it was largely by his influence that Bedell obtained the Provostship of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1627, which was the first step towards his preferment to the bishoprics of Kilmore and Ardagh.³

While he was thus busied in his daily duties he formed large plans of literary work. In 1624 he had already issued his *Elements of Architecture*, which, in spite of its scantiness, is full of information and admirably written. He had doubtless at this time completed to the end of the reign of Elizabeth his *State of Christendom*, a book which does more credit to his power of writing English than to his capacity of correctly reasoning out the political problems suggested by his observation. Had he lived to fulfil all, or even the greater part, of his literary intentions, something more worthy of his conspicuous talents might have survived. It was his purpose to have written a life of Luther, a work in which he would have achieved a considerable success. But Charles dissuaded him from undertaking that congenial task, and made him an allowance of two hundred, which was afterwards raised to five hundred, pounds a year, to enable him to collect materials for a *History of England*. Whether this allowance was ever paid or not may perhaps be a matter of doubt, but no one who has attentively read Wotton's *Characters*

¹ *Reliquiæ*, pp. 323, 324, 327-329.

² *Idem (Life)*, p. xxxvii.

³ *Idem*, pp. 329, 330.

will honour the King's choice of a subject. That the learned Provost would have produced a picturesque and in the main a truthful life of Luther can scarcely be questioned, whereas it is almost equally certain that he would have failed signally in his historical writing. His interests were biographical rather than historical, and the world is the poorer for the loss of his projected life of the great German reformer.¹

Wotton's place as a poet, in spite of the fewness of his poems, is assured; he had drunk with sufficiency of the waters of Hippocrene, his melody is quaintly sonorous, and his feeling is natural and pure. His observation of men and nature is delicate and subtle, and his piety is plainly manifested in his striking hymn composed at Venice,² when he was at the point of death. It is as a poet of no common order that he will be known to posterity, and the reflective reader can but regret that, having given the world "a taste of his quality," he should have refrained from producing more in this kind. His character sketches are exact and interesting, and the *Life and Death of the Duke of Buckingham*³ and the *Parallel* present pictures of much grace, and not unduly varnished with the highly-coloured adulation of that fawning period. As a letter writer he has an ease and a humour quite his own; he never shrinks from using homely expressions to serve for emphatic illustration, and his affection for his intimates is touchingly shown. Casaubon he did neglect in a manner very hard to pardon; nor does the probable reason tend to exalt his magnanimity. No apology will be

¹ *Reliquiæ* (*Life*), p. xlviii.

² *Idem*, pp. 389, 390.

³ During April or May, 1626, Wotton was entrusted with a highly important piece of business, by which he was able to oblige both Charles and the Duke of Buckingham. The favourite was accused of having conspired to poison the late King by administering a posset to him during a fit of the ague. One George Eglisam, on the authority of a roll said to have been brought to the Marquis of Hamilton by his cousin, the daughter of Lord Oldbare, published a list of great personages whom the Duke was said to have poisoned. Her Wotton visited, and received a frank statement, when he showed his commission. A carter of Smith, a woodmonger in Westminster, had found the list and brought it to Thomas Allet, one of her footmen, who handed it over to her. She caused it to be presented to her cousin, the Marquis of Hamilton, whose name appeared in the list of those who were to be killed in this manner. The whole list was proved to be a clumsy lie, so that Wotton was able to write a satisfactory letter to the Duke of Buckingham, explaining how the forgery had been foisted upon an innocent gentlewoman, and was not deserving of notice (*Reliquiæ*, pp. 545-551).

attempted here for this grave fault, nor any defence made against the sneers of Chamberlain and Carleton, save that the latter was a rival, and Chamberlain was his henchman. But common gratitude, as well as high breeding, demanded that he should have paid more attention to his old host and generous friend, Isaac Casaubon, who felt his almost contemptuous neglect with much bitterness of spirit.

As an educationalist Wotton was distinctly before his age, as his *Survey of Education* shows; let those who would learn something of the essentials of sound training of the young consult his pithy aphorisms, and they will be compelled to acknowledge that in some respects he saw more clearly and with greater correctness than the leading theorists of the present day. His last years were spent in faithful service of his school. So good a judge as Boyle, son of the Earl of Cork, says that he himself and his brother were sent "to be bred up at Eton College, near Windsor, whose Provost at that time was Sir Henry Wotton, a person that was not only a fine gentleman himself, but very well skilled in the art of making others so; betwixt whom and the Earl of Cork an ancient friendship had been cultivated by reciprocal civilities."¹ Archbishop Laud,² too, in his account of his province of Canterbury, reports concerning the diocese of Lincoln: "For Eton College, within that diocese, I do not find but that the Provost, Sir Henry Wotton, hath carried himself very worthily." The man in authority who received testimony so favourable from a lynx-eyed primate like Laud assuredly deserved to the full the measure of praise accorded to him. Nor can there be any doubt that Wotton merited all that could be said to his credit as Provost

¹ Harwood, *Alumni Etonenses*, p. 15. These *reciprocal civilities* are curiously illustrated by the following fragment of a letter from the Earl of Cork to Wotton: "For this time, I pray you, accept in good part from me a bottle made of a serpentine stone, which hath the quality to give any wine or water that shall be infused therein for four and twenty hours the taste and operation of the Spa-water, and is very medicinable for the cure of the spleen, and the gravel, as I am informed. But sure I am that Sir Walter Raleigh put a value upon it, he having obtained it amongst the spoils of the Governor of St. Omer, in his last fatal expedition, and by his page understood the virtues thereof, and that his captain highly esteemed it. And surely some good cures it hath wrought since it came into my hands, for those two infirmities" (*Reliquiæ*, p. 372). This letter is dated Dec. 22nd, 1636. When two friends send medicine one to another, a touching intimacy subsists between them.

² Laud, *Troubles and Trials* (1695), p. 531.

of Eton. He was one of the greater heads, under whose wise sway the school grew to much prosperity, and his old pupils seem to have had as unaffected a reverence for him as the later Rugby boys entertained towards Doctor Arnold.

But, faithful as he was to his duties at Eton, Wotton had a passionate fondness for his old home at Bocton and for his Alma Mater of Oxford, both of which he visited respectively once a year.¹ In the summer of 1639, instead of going to his University, he went to his old school at Winchester, and during his return journey he uttered the following touching words to his travelling companion, which seem to indicate a growing consciousness of the shadow of approaching death: "How useful was that advice of a holy monk, who persuaded his friend to *perform his customary devotions in a constant place, because in that place we usually meet with those very thoughts which possessed us at our last being there*; and I find it thus far experimentally true, that, at my now being in that school, and seeing that very place where I sate when I was a boy, occasioned me to remember those very thoughts of my youth which then possessed me; sweet thoughts, indeed, that promised my growing years numerous pleasures, without mixtures of cares: and those to be enjoyed when time (which I therefore thought slow-paced) had changed my *youth into manhood*. But age and experience have taught me that those were but empty hopes; for I have always found it true, as my Saviour did foretell, *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof*. Nevertheless, I saw there a succession of boys using the same recreations, and, questionless, possessed with the same thoughts that then possessed me. Thus one generation succeeds another, both in their *lives, recreations, hopes, fears, and deaths*."² This visit, which had so deeply impressed his sensitive soul, was in the summer of the year in which he was taken off by asthma and ague-fever, both of which had been his constant enemies during his declining years.

In his last days Wotton was visited by the learned and pious John Hales, of Eton, to whom he was the first to give the name of "*Bibliotheca Ambulans*," or "the walking library."³ But he was so well prepared for death that he needed little spiritual consolation, as is beautifully shown

¹ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, p. lvi.

² *Idem*, pp. lvi., lvii.

³ *Idem*, p. 475.

in his words to his friend a short time before he passed away. "I have in my passage to the grave," he said, with an air of devout peace and tranquil faith, "met with most of those joys of which a discursive soul is capable, and being entertained with more inferior pleasures than the sons of men are usually made partakers of; nevertheless, in this voyage I have not always floated on the calm sea of content, but have often met with cross winds and storms, and with many troubles of mind and temptations to evil. And yet, though I have been and am a man compassed about with human frailties, Almighty God hath by His grace prevented me from making the shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, the thought of which is now the joy of my heart, and I most humbly praise Him for it. And I humbly acknowledge that it was not myself, but He that hath kept me to this great age, and let Him take the glory of His great mercy. And, my dear friend, I now see that I draw near my harbour of death—that harbour that will secure me from all the future storms and waves of this restless world; and I praise God I am willing to leave, and expect a better, *wherein dwelleth righteousness*."¹ These tranquil words show that the old man, who was the last male of a fruitful stock, was ready and waiting for death, and he fell asleep without a fear in the beginning of December, 1639. He lies buried at Eton, with the aphorism, of which he was perhaps unduly proud, engraven by his own desire on a plain tombstone:—

Hic jacet hujus sententiæ primus author,
DISPUTANDI PRURITUS, ECCLESIARUM SCABIES,

which may be Englished, "Here lies the first author of this sentiment, 'The itch of disputation is the scab of the Churches.'"²

Whatever may have been the precise meaning which Wotton attached to his epitaph, the words themselves point to the fact that he was strongly repelled by the argumentative tendencies of Puritanism. Throughout his long life he was a kingsman, who was loyal to the core, though neither of his royal masters entirely merited his single-hearted devotion. They did but little for him in his hour of need, and one of them went to his account without having actually paid his faithful servant what

¹ *Reliquiæ (Life)*, pp. lvii., lviii.

² *Idem ibidem*, pp. l., li.

had been spent in his own service. How, then, is Wotton to be estimated, and what rank may he fairly claim in his varied accomplishments? He has left us one indication of his character in a letter written to his friend and physician, Dr. Castle, in which he says, after thanking the doctor for some news of the outer world, "For though I am a cloistered man from the condition of my present life, besides my confinement by infirmity, yet having spent so much of mine age among noise abroad, and seven years thereof in the Court at home, there doth still hang upon me, I know not how, a certain concupiscence of novelties."¹ This sentence throws a clear light over one side of Wotton's intellect, which must be described as being of a scientific caste, alike in its curiosity and in its thirst for new knowledge. That he was a learned man, Casaubon, no mean judge in such matters, has more than once testified; that he took a keen interest in physical science is shown by his intercourse with Bacon, and by numerous passages in his letters; that he stands in a high rank as a man of letters, who may have promised much and performed little, but who adorned all that he did with a grace and force peculiar to himself, few will be found to deny; and that he was a true poet of no small originality is admitted by the consent of all critics. It is, then, perhaps as a scholar and a man of letters that Wotton attained his supreme height, and posterity can only regret that his public employment prevented him from leaving more behind him in that province in which he was most fitted to excel.

His critical capacity, as Dr. Ward well points out, is to be seen to great advantage in a letter which he wrote to Milton just before the young poet was setting out on his journey through part of Europe to Italy. "Since your going," he writes, "you have charged me with a new obligation, both for a very kind letter from you . . . and for a dainty piece of entertainment that came therewith. Wherein I should much commend the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain *Doric* delicacy in your songs and odes; whereunto I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language *ipsa mollitie*."² This early discernment of the commanding genius of Milton, at a time when he was just becoming

¹ *Reliquiæ*, p. 363. N.B.—The *seven* years are made up of four and a half between 1595–1599, of one during 1610–1611, and of one and a half between 1612 and 1614.

² *Reliquiæ*, pp. 342, 343.

known by his *Comus*, and when Francis Quarles was by far the most popular poet of the day, is surprising in a contemporary, and gives evidence of a critical perception, which is at all times rare. Nay, more, it goes far to exalt the poetic genius of Wotton himself that he was able to recognise the uniqueness of Milton's power both in tragic and in lyric verse. Most of the great men of the first half of the seventeenth century appreciated the young poet as a scholar of some performance and greater promise; while he was regarded by the critics of the latter half as a powerful and pragmatical pamphleteer. His poetry was but little read and understood by his contemporaries, though by it his genius has been correctly measured by posterity. That Wotton should have been so far before his age in his estimate therefore marks him at once as a critic of the highest rank, who makes a critical discovery and does not content himself with the mere repetition of critical commonplaces. Thus as a poet, letter-writer, critic, and man of letters he must always hold a high place among the strong men of his nation and of his time.

Enough has, perhaps, already been said in depreciation of his diplomatic capacity, and the grumbling comments of Chamberlain and Carleton have been duly noticed in their place. But this much must be said for Wotton, that he went upon all his embassies with a single-hearted purpose of telling the strict truth, a virtue which was so rare in his day that his very truthfulness gained for him the reputation of surpassing diplomacy, not to say dissimulation. Ambassadors were, in his view, "spies of the time,"¹ and it is only unfortunate for his rank amongst his fellows that he did not commonly use the results of his espial to great advantage. That he formed a dignified and picturesque figure in all the Courts to which he was sent on the Continent goes without saying; that his speeches to the sovereigns upon whom he waited were eloquent and able is no less true; that he struggled hard to press his point has already been seen, and that he was sincerely anxious to serve his country cannot in any way be doubted. That he was commonly unsuccessful in his more important missions was in part due to his inaptitude for diplomatic problems of grave and profound interest,

¹ *Reliquiæ*, p. 306. "Ambassadors (in our old Kentish language) are but spies of the time."

and in part that James, out of the fulness of his fussy wisdom, sent him more than once to solve the insoluble. As an ambassador, then, Wotton was no ordinary, but a striking and almost romantic figure on the stage of European politics, whose hard destiny it was to be entrusted with matters beyond his capacity, but who came back from every embassy with his character unblemished, and who spent his all in the service of his King and his country. Faults he may have had in his method of conducting business; he may not always have followed his principle of consistently telling the truth; he may have neglected one old friend at least, and slandered Carleton, as Carleton asserts. But there can be no question that he was in the main a man of great honesty, who did his utmost to perform his duties exactly, and whose failure was due to want of supreme diplomatic capacity, and to no carelessness of his own. He was not a great ambassador, but he was nobler than many of his fellows, and where he failed he incurred no disgrace.

As Provost of Eton Wotton was in his right place, and he fulfilled his duties there with rigid and scrupulous care. Enlightened beyond his age in matters educational, he did much to increase the prosperity of Eton; and he was the trusted friend alike of the Fellows and the pupils. Whenever he went into the school he contrived to leave behind him some choicely compacted aphorism, which would be likely to profit the scholars. Indeed, in this art of condensing his thoughts into aphorisms he has few superiors; scarcely a single letter to his friends on the most trivial subject fails to contain at least one pithy saying wittily couched in pregnant and pointed language. He was not, perhaps, a great man, though he possessed not a few of the elements of greatness: but with some exceptions, which have been duly noticed, during the larger part of his life he showed himself to be a good man. He was a sound and loyal Churchman of a somewhat mystical turn of mind, and he passed away in good time for himself—before the breaking out of that relentless Civil War, in which so many that were noble and good found a little-honoured death. His life was rather a series of “uncompleted cadences” than one continuous flow of song, and his snatches of immortal verse make that incompleteness only the more striking and impressive. Cowley, with whose elegy these scattered notes must come

to an end, passed through the whole of that sad yet noble contest, and lived to experience the gratitude which a royal favourite wrung from the King he had laboured to serve. His poem is of the eulogistic type and is overloaded with far-fetched conceits; but for all that the turgid lines contain a larger pinch of truth than is commonly used to season such spicy dishes of posthumous praise:—

“What shall we say, since silent now is he,
 Who, when he spoke, all things would silent be?
 Who had so many languages in store,
 That only Fame shall speak of him in more?
 Whom England now return'd no more must see;
 He's gone to heaven, on his *fourth embassy*.¹
 On earth he travell'd often, not to say
 H' had been abroad to pass loose time away:
 For, in whatever land he chanc'd to come,
 He read the men and manners,² bringing home
 Their wisdom, learning, and their piety,
 As if he went to conquer, not to see.
 So well he understood the most and best
 Of tongues that Babel sent into the West;
 Spoke them so truly, that he had (you'd swear)
 Not only lived, but been born everywhere.
 Justly each nation's speech to him was known;
 Who for the world was made, not us alone.
 Nor ought the language of that man be less,
 Who in his breast had all things to express:
 We say that learning's endless, and blame Fate
 For not allowing life a longer date.
 He did the utmost bounds of knowledge find,
 But found them not so large as his own mind:
 But, like the brave Pellean youth, did moan,
 Because that art had no more worlds than one.
 And when he saw that he through all had past,
 He died, lest he should idle be at last.”³

¹ A fourth to his three embassies to Venice.

² An allusion to his *State of Christendom*.

³ Cowley, *Works* (1672), *Miscellanies*, pp. 5, 6.

THE HUMOURIST

ROBERT BURTON

"Nullam, Vare, sacra vite prius severis arborem
Circa mite solum Tiburis et mœnia Catili:
Siccis omnia nam dura deus proposuit, neque
Mordaces aliter diffugiunt sollicitudines."

HORACE, *Odes* I. xviii. 1-4.

A MAN of a retiring disposition, who has thought much and read more, is apt to become whimsical in his ways, and to seek every opportunity of avoiding the society of all save a few intimates, who are themselves sparingly admitted into his company. If he be a fellow of his College in residence, and, at the same time, a clerk in Holy Orders, the moment he has performed his sacred office, he has frequently a habit of stealing off to his beloved books, and of reading, marking, and inwardly digesting, as the Catechism commands. In the Combination-Room he may be a witty and facetious companion when the humour takes him; but he commonly sits silent, looking into his glass if he drink wine, and into vacancy if he do not. He loves what is called a brown study, which he seldom leaves in company; and if he be disturbed in his reflections, he is wont to answer at random. His life is essentially solitary, and solitude is the common source of melancholy. His books are his consolation; but even these will not wholly lift the surrounding shadow, and despite of the fact that woman introduced sin into the Garden of Eden, he realizes that "man was not made to live alone." Yet when he meets the individual woman, singly or in the aggregate, he is so far from attempting to correct the error of his life that his knees knock together, and, if he can, he turns down a by-street to avoid the enchanting and ensnaring presence. His mother and his sisters do not alarm his sensitive soul; he cannot marry them;—the Prayer-Book forbids any such unholy alliance;—but they are the only women who do not cause

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ROBERT BURTON.

From the "Anatomy of Melancholy" (1638).

him palpitation, or some kindred affliction. Thus by degrees he develops a whimsicality which is apt to be oppressive to others and distressing to himself. So conscious is he of his own failing that he shrinks from company, and, if he be sufficiently able, pours out his sorrows and his humour into a book. Such a book is always interesting reading, for it contains the life-story of its author, however carefully that story may be involved in a cloud of extraneous mystification. He will not share his thoughts with one or two friends; he prefers to take the reading world into his confidence, doubtless from the very pertinent reason that, while the world reads his work, he is able in his own personality to remain unknown to the world. If he be endowed with a sense of humour, he laughs at the follies which he sees around him, and rebukes the vices with a stern and uncompromising severity. But he remains deeply conscious of the fact that he is himself not untouched, either by the follies or by the vices which he gravely rebukes. His solitude is peopled with thoughts now melancholy, now merry; but even his mirth is marked by sadness, and he moves through life like an ancient hermit, of it yet removed from its keenest joys, free from its most glaring faults yet faulty in himself.

Such a humourist was Robert Burton, a man fitted for society by his natural gifts, yet removed from society by his almost unnatural shyness. He was descended from an ancient family, and the son of Ralph Burton, of Lindley, by Dorothy Faunt his wife, whose brother Anthony Faunt, of Foston, "fell into so great a passion of melancholy that, within a short time after, he died, in the year 1588."¹ It was, therefore, from his mother's side of the house that Robert Burton inherited that melancholy which was his bane in life, and which has made him immortal. He was born on the eighth of February, 1576, in his father's house in Lindley, which, though actually in Leicestershire, is near Oldbury, in Warwickshire, the hill of which attracted his childish fancy, though, could he see it to-day, he must surely have changed his mind.² He received his early education at the Gram-

¹ William Burton, *Description of Leicestershire* (1777), p. 97.

² *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1638), p. 262. (N.B.—The pagination of the Fifth Edition is inexact, and this reference will be found on the second page numbered 262). Plot (*Natural History of Staffordshire*, 1686, p.

mar School of Sutton Coldfield, where he found the "Grammar Scholar's" life to be a serious slavery,¹ so severe was the discipline of his pedagogue and so continuous the drudgery of his course. He was endowed with a natural taste for mathematics, and during his later life he took much pleasure in drawing maps and plans, and even in the construction of mathematical instruments.² His elder brother was William Burton, of Falde, in Staffordshire, whose *Description of Leicestershire* is still of great value, and whose varied knowledge was of much assistance to Sir William Dugdale, whom he introduced to Sir Simeon Archer, the Tamworth antiquary.³ He had another brother, Ralph,⁴ of whom little is known, save that he Englished several passages of the Latin poets, which appear in the *Anatomy*, and a brother George, whom he barely mentions,⁵ with several sisters.

Despite the numbers of the family of which he was one, Burton would seem to have been a shy boy, who developed into a shy man. Always subject to the melancholy which he inherited from his mother, he found his school life a trial to him, and the disease did not leave him when, during the Long Vacation of 1593, he was entered as a fellow-commoner of Brazennose College, in Oxford.⁶ Unless there is some confusion between two Robert Burtons, as would seem possible, he was elected a student of Christ Church in 1599, where he proceeded to his Bachelor's degree on June 30th, 1602; to his Master's degree on the 9th of June, 1605; and to his first degree in Divinity on May 16th, 1614; while he did not receive his final licence to preach until December 3rd, 1614.⁷ His

276) says Burton "was born at Falde in this county, where I was shown the very house (as they said) of his nativity." This very natural confusion concerning Burton's birthplace arose from the fact that the house of Falde was a jointure-house of the family, at which his brother William lived (*Anatomy*, p. 262). But Burton's own word must weigh against that of a later writer. In the titles of several of his choice books, which he gave to the University Library of Oxford, "he added to his surname Lindliacus Leicestrensis" (Bliss's Wood, *Athenæ*, Vol. II. cols. 652-654), which must be regarded as decisive on the point.

¹ *Anatomy*, pp. 260, 261, and 144. ² *Idem*, p. 277.

³ Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol. III. cols. 153-156. ⁴ *Anatomy*, p. 562.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 705.

⁶ *Oxford Historical Society, Registers of the University*, Vol. II. pt. ii., *Matriculations*, p. 198.

⁷ *Idem.*, Vol. II. pt. iii. p. 236. The length of the interval between 1593 and 1599 would seem almost irreconcilable either with the facts of the case or the custom of the day. It was usual for members of the

formal tutor¹ was Dr. John Bancroft, who afterwards became the fierce persecutor of the Puritans, from whom his distinguished pupil may have acquired his dislike of both the Catholics and the stricter reformers.² That Burton was a diligent student and an omnivorous reader cannot be doubted by any one who will take the trouble of perusing his celebrated *Anatomy of Melancholy*, instead of lavishly praising it without opening its venerable pages. Though he cannot be called an indiscriminately superstitious man, his disposition was tinged with a quaint credulity, which he must have inherited from his mother. When he is commenting on amulets, he remarks, "Being in the country not many years since, at Lindley, in Leicestershire, my father's house, I first observed this amulet of a spider in a nutshell lapped in silk, etc., so applied for an ague by my mother."³ At first he had a true scholar's contempt for so transparent a charm; but gradually he became convinced of its efficacy in some cases at least. That superstitious fancies of this kind haunted him during his generally solitary life at Oxford is clearly seen from the hints which are scattered over his great book, in spite of his plain perception that superstition was the nurse of melancholy.

On November 29th, 1616, he was presented by the Dean and Canons of Christ Church to the living of St. Thomas's in the west suburb of Oxford, where he always administered the sacrament to his parishioners in the form of wafers.⁴ Some years later his friend and patron, Lord George Berkeley, presented him to the living of Segrave, in his native county, by which he was rendered independent during the remaining years of his life,⁵ which "he

University to graduate between their fifteenth and nineteenth years. The question then arises, What was Burton doing from 1593 to 1599? The only possible explanation would seem to be that he was ill, and, perhaps, even not in residence during that period, unless there is a confusion between two Burtons. But such a confusion would not seem probable, since Burton himself says that he was at Christ Church (*Anatomy*, "To the Reader," pp. 2, 3; cf. p. 282 *et passim*). We are driven then upon the supposition that he must have been ill for a long period, which would account in part for his melancholy.

¹ Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol. II. col. 652.

² *Anatomy*, "To the Reader," pp. 28, 29.

³ *Anatomy*, pp. 390, 391.

⁴ Wood (Bliss), *Athenæ*, Vol. II. col. 652.

⁵ Kennet, *Register* (1744) on 1660, when the Seventh Edition of the *Anatomy* came out, pp. 320, 321. Fuller's date of *about* 1636 can hardly be correct (*Worthies: Leicestershire*, p. 134). *Anatomy*, p. 261.

kept with some ado to his dying day." Of Burton's life at Oxford only a few scanty traces are scattered over his *Anatomy*, and a small number of stories more or less authentic is to be found in writers contemporary, or who profess to have derived their information from contemporary sources. When he was in the depths of his melancholy, "nothing at last could make him laugh but going down to the bridge-foot in Oxford and hearing the bargemen scold, and storm, and swear at one another, at which he would set his hands to his sides and laugh most profusely."¹ The eloquence of the bargee seems a curious subject of diversion to so retired a scholar; but it must be confessed that undergraduates of a later day have been known to derive similar amusement from a like source, and have even striven to rival that matchless perfection of invective. In company, when his fit left him, his wit was so pungent that he delighted all his companions, though he was so abstemious as to drink nothing but water.² Yet his general shyness is perfectly shown by a curious story, which Thomas Hearne has gleaned from some unknown source. "The Earl of Southampton went into a shop and inquired of the bookseller for Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. Mr. Burton sat in a corner of the shop at that time. Says the bookseller, 'My Lord, if you please, I can show you the author.' He did so. 'Mr. Burton,' says the Earl, '*your servant*.' 'Mr. Southampton,' says Mr. Burton, '*your servant*'; and away he went."³

Feeling his melancholy growing upon him, Burton set about to cure it, if possible, by writing a book, half-serious and half-jocose, on the sad subject. Such a cure had too much of the homœopathic first principle in it to be quite successful.⁴ But he must have begun his collections for his book early in his University career; the amount of close reading in most unusual authors, the general aptness of the huge volume of quotations, and the strong matter with which they are linked together, are the results of extreme and careful labour. The first edition was printed in Oxford in 1621, in quarto, and the whole of the issue was so eagerly bought that an enlarged and amended edition

¹ Kennet, *Annual Register* (margin), p. 321.

² *Anatomy*, "To the Reader," p. 12.

³ *Reliquiæ Hearnianæ*, reprinted 1868, Vol. I. p. 282.

⁴ Kennet, *Register*, p. 320.

was published in folio in Oxford in 1624, with the well-known frontispiece by Le Blon. This was followed by a third in 1628, by a fourth in 1632, by a fifth in 1638, the last during the author's life, from which the succeeding quotations have been taken, by a sixth in 1651-2, by a seventh in 1660, and by an eighth in 1676, which was the last of the older editions, though there have been many modern successors, of which the best is that published by George Bell, and edited by Shillito. The speedy sale of the book greatly enriched the publisher, who is said to have obtained an estate by it.¹ Those who have read the book will not wonder at the rapidity with which it was bought. Its interest is sustained from the first page to the last, and it might prove useful to many hypochondriacs in the world, who suffer from imaginary melancholy.

Before proceeding to notice the book in detail, it will be well to call attention to several minor productions by the author, whose time was almost completely filled up by the correction and enlargement of his book. Shortly after Camden's death an unpagged collection of elegies was issued at Oxford by John Lichfield and Jacob Short, printers of the University, under the title of *Camdeni Insignia*, in 1624. Amongst these is the following contribution by Burton, in which he cleverly connects Camden, the schoolmaster, with his predecessor, Ascham:—

“In laudem Aschami Camdenus talia quondam
 Scripsit, et in laudes sic ego (clare) tuas;
 Idque ex ore tuo; verbis et versibus iisdem
 Te canto, tua queis Musa beavit eum.
 Dignior et multo es Parium quem marmor honestat,
 Quem pictor, Musæ, et quisque poeta canat,
 Sidera quem donent cœlesti sede, Lycæi
 Quem Mysta æternis percolat officiis.”

It cannot be said that these verses are quite perfect, or even very poetical; but they have much vigour and no little sincerity, and these are qualities not too often found in similar productions of their date.² In a curious little collection of elegies on Paul, Viscount Bayning of Sudbury, printed at Oxford in 1638, is another of Burton's productions in this kind, which is marked by the same qualities,

¹ *Anatomy*, “To the Reader,” p. 10. Kennet, p. 320.

² *Camdeni Insignia*, sub loco, cui paginae numerus deest.

and to which a rendering is given in quaint and expressive English :—

“ Quid voveat dulci nutricula majus alumno,
 Quam bona fortunæ, corporis, atque animi?
 En, hæc hercæ hoc simul omnia: quid petat ultra?
 Quid potius? Cœlum; quod novus hospes habet.”

The English version runs thus :—

“ Can nurse choose in her sweet babe more to find
 Than goods of fortune, body, and of mind?
 Lo, here at once all this: what greater bliss
 Canst hope or wish? Heaven: why, there he is.”

It is not certain if this homely rendering be from the pen of Burton; but it bears the impression of his mint-mark, and the unaffected surprise with which the last line closes is quite after his manner. The efforts of Burton's Latin Muse, to which attention has just been called, may be faulty in rhythm and occasionally in Latinity; but they have a rugged vigour of their own which renders them worthy of a place beside his greater book. Whether or no he wrote any more in this kind does not appear, but a careful search amongst the treasures of the Bodleian Library would doubtless reveal some as yet unknown offerings to Apollo, which might throw additional light upon their author's character.

As has been said, Burton was not what might be called a superstitious man for his period, but he had a firm faith in astrology during the greater part of his life. He spent some time in casting his own nativity, and he even went so far as to predict his death. That this prediction was fulfilled to within fourteen days may be seen from his brother William's statement;¹ that he himself helped to fulfil it is a common tradition. Aubrey, that unscrupulous but accurate describer, remarks, “Mr. Robert Hooke, of Gresham College, told me that he lay in the chamber in Christ Church, that was Mr. Burton's, of whom 'tis whispered that, *non obstante* all his astrology and his book of *Melancholy*, he ended his days in that chamber by hanging himself.”² Whatever may be the truth of this story, and its probability is perhaps increased by Burton's tendency to hypochondria, there can be little

¹ *Description of Leicestershire* (1777), pp. 230, 231. “Having almost past his climacterical year, wanting but fourteen days,” are the words.

² Aubrey, *Brief Lives* (edited by Andrew Clarke in 1897), Vol. I. p. 138.

doubt that he died on January 25th, 1639, in the sixty-third year of his age,¹ and was buried at Oxford "in the Cathedral Church close to the monument of St. Frideswide." The later years of his life had been a burden to him, from the continued increase of his melancholy, which did not, however, prevent him from working at his book and adding to its contents from the resources of his reading. The publisher of the edition in 1660 professes to have incorporated additional materials, which had been left behind him by the author. But this would seem not to have been the case; in his address to his reader, Burton explicitly declares his intention, now that he had reached the glory of a fifth edition, of never putting forth his book again.² Any additions, therefore, if made at all, must have been made at the discretion of the publisher, and they cannot be traced in either the 1660 edition or in that of 1676.

It may be taken for granted, then, that the fifth edition represents the *Anatomy* in the final dress intended by its learned author, and from this edition all the succeeding quotations have been taken. It remains now to endeavour to give some idea of the contents of this remarkable folio, which was a favourite book with many generations of readers, and which ran through more editions than any book of its time. With the second edition, which was the first published in folio, appears Le Blon's remarkable frontispiece, which is preceded by a curious description of its contents in homely verse. The central panel of the engraving is occupied by the full title of the book, which runs as follows: "*The Anatomy of Melancholy: What it is, with all the Kinds, Causes, Symptomes, Prognostickes, and severall Cures of it. In three Partitions, with their severall Sections, Mem-*

¹ Wm. Burton, *Description of Leicestershire* (1777), pp. 230, 231. Nichols, *Leicestershire* (1800), Vol. III. pt. i. p. 419, where the following quotation from a letter of Dr. Accepted Frewen, Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, to Laud is made: "On Saturday, January 25, died Mr. Robert Burton, of Christ Church, who hath given £5 *per annum* for ever to the University Library, besides a considerable number of his books to be taken out of his study, and because a benefactor to the University, I was present at his funeral." Kennet (*Register*, p. 321) is therefore wrong in giving the date of Burton's death as January 8th. The date of the funeral was January 27th (Wood, *Athenæ*, Vol. II. col. 654). The list of books appears in eight folio pages in the *Catalogue of Benefactors to the Bodleian Library* (Vol. I. p. 538).

² *Anatomy*, "To the Reader," pp. 13, 14.

bers, and Subsections. Philosophically, Medicinally, Historically opened and cut up by Democritus Junior. With a Satyricall Preface conducing to the following Discourse." The motto which Burton chose to set under this explicit title was, *Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci*. Above the title is a representation of Democritus of Abdera musing in a garden upon the cut-up bodies of animals. To the left of this is a panel containing a picture of jealousy, represented by a number of birds in a landscape; while to the right is another landscape, containing such animals as a sleeping dog and cat, a buck and a doe, and a hare, to typify solitude. Under jealousy is an elongated lover, with his hat over his eyes, looking as woe-begone as a skinned eel. Below solitude is a physician seated musing in his chair, with a number of surgery bottles on a shelf behind him, whose face betrays that he is a hypochondriac. Under the lover is a kneeling monk to express superstition, and opposite to him is a lively figure of a madman. The printer's name, Henry Cripps, the place of printing, Oxford,¹ and the date, 1638, occupy the centre panel at the base of the title, and they are supported on the left by a representation of *borage*, and on the right by one of *hellebore*, herbs said to be useful to cure melancholy and madness.

The frontispiece, which is unique in its kind, but which may have been suggested by that to Coryate's *Crudities*, is followed by a dedication to Lord George Berkeley, one of Burton's most efficient patrons. Next is to be found a vigorous copy of Latin Elegiacs in the shape of an address from the author to his book. The next poem in forcible English is of great interest, as it seems almost certainly to have suggested Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. The opening stanzas will be sufficient to illustrate this piece of literary parentage:—

“When I go musing all alone,
Thinking of divers things foreknown,

¹ A note at the end of the Table of Contents of this fifth edition, from which the frontispiece has been described above, states that the edition was begun at Edinburgh, but forthwith stopped by the University printers, by whom the book was first brought to be completed in London, and finally it was finished and issued from Oxford. The author, therefore, apologizes in his own naïve fashion for any blunders, which may have arisen from the variety of printers, and complains that he has been *ab his fere exauctoratus*, while he must bear the blame of faults and omissions, which are due to the printer alone.

When I build castles in the air,
 Void of sorrow and void of fear,
 Pleasing myself with phantasms sweet,
 Methinks the time runs very fleet.
 All my joys to this are folly,
 Naught so sweet as melancholy.

When I lie waking all alone,
 Recounting what I have ill done,
 My thoughts on me then tyrannise,
 Fear and sorrow me surprise,
 Whether I tarry still or go,
 Methinks the time moves very slow.
 All my griefs to this are jolly,
 Naught so sad as melancholy."

That Milton had the refrain of this by no means untuneful poem ringing in his ears when he wrote his own delightful lyrics can be as little doubted as that he vastly improved upon the source of his inspiration. But the careful reader of the whole of Burton's verses will be able to trace many family likenesses which point unmistakably to literary relationship, and he will be grateful to *Democritus Junior* for being the inspiration of the later poet's finished lines. Burton was a poet of some compass, as the translations scattered through his *Anatomy* abundantly prove, and it will be noticed that his own renderings or imitations of the ancient poets are commonly more vigorous than those of other translators, whom he sparingly quotes.

Before attempting to make a summary of the *Anatomy* with illustrative quotations, it will be useful to explain its origin and method, which are clearly set forth in the "Address of Democritus to the Reader." As has been remarked, Burton was afflicted with deep melancholy, in part hereditary and in part acquired from his mode of life, and he took this somewhat unsatisfactory means of curing his affliction. He was a bachelor, who had none of the consolations of home-life to wean him from the torture of his own despondent moods, and the very nature of his lonely studies, no less than the direction which they took, served to increase his tendency to hypochondria.¹ He took the name of Democritus of Abdera because that satirical philosopher was wont to laugh to scorn the follies of men, and he hoped himself, from behind the cloak of the "laughing philosopher," to scoff wittily at the absurdities of his own day.² Finding that his melancholy was

¹ *Anatomy*, "Democritus to the Reader," p. 3. ² *Idem ibidem*, p. 2.

increased by idleness, he undertook his work, "by being busy to avoid melancholy."¹ He was fully conscious of its defect in the superabundance of quotation, and though he justly claimed that his method was his own, he freely admitted that in the main he had rather compiled a *cento* than written an original book.² He had intended to have written in Latin, but he feared that the printers would not have accepted it in that ancient and expressive tongue; and he readily recognised the careless style of his book.³ Though devoted to his professional study of Divinity, he was able to say of himself with perfect truth, "In the theoric of physic I have taken some pains, not with an intent to practise, but to satisfy myself."⁴ As will appear later, his knowledge of medicine was great and surprisingly accurate according to the empirical standard of his day. Whether he took any of his own suggested remedies for his disease, or whether he contented himself with recommending them to others, after the fashion of more physicians than one, is not known; but he certainly failed to cure himself, if he did. So convinced was he of the universality of melancholy that he recommended his readers to take a pilgrimage to Anticyra, and asserted "that it is like to be as prosperous a voyage as that of Guiana, and that there is much more need of hellebore than of tobacco."⁵

As befitted his sacred calling, Burton was a man of peace, and he treats his readers to a fiery philippic against war, backing his denunciations with numerous and pointed quotations.⁶ Referring in passing to one of Sir John Davies's tracts on Ireland,⁷ he hastens to set forth his ideal commonwealth, which, though it is later than *Utopia*, is scarcely inferior in point of style and vigour.⁸ Amongst many other pieces of clear political perception, he has anticipated the more modern theory of taxation with remarkable insight. "Of such wares as are transported or brought in," he says, "if they be necessary, commodious,

¹ *Anatomy*, "Democritus to the Reader," p. 5. ² *Idem ibidem*, p. 8.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 11.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, p. 16.

⁵ *Idem ibidem*, p. 18. Anticyra—there were three places of the name—was famed for the growth of hellebore, the ancient cure of madness.

⁶ *Idem*, pp. 30–34.

⁷ *Idem*, p. 52. The tract was entitled *A Discourse discovering the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued or brought under obedience to the Crown of England until the beginning of His Majesty's Happy Reign* (1612).

⁸ *Idem*, pp. 60–68.

and such as nearly concern man's life, as corn, wood, coal, etc., and such provision we cannot want, I will have *little or no custom paid, no taxes*; but for such things as are for pleasure, delight, or ornament, as wine, spice, tobacco, silk, velvet, cloth of gold, lace, jewels, etc., *a greater impost.*"¹ Such a perception of fiscal fitness does honour to the insight of the scholarly recluse, who could look up from his books and view the affairs of common life with common sense. Like most old bachelors, he could clearly perceive the possible and actual deficiencies in the wives of others, upon which he comments with great severity, and which he condemns as the frequent causes of needless melancholy.² Having thus eased his mind at the expense of a sex with which he had but small practical acquaintance, Burton proceeds to classify briefly the natural divisions of melancholy men, giving illustrations of each with copious quotations from ancient authorities. Princes, courtiers, philosophers, scholars, lovers, men who are vain, covetous, spendthrifts, misers, or afflicted with any excessive vice, and those who suffer from physical sickness, make up the "noble army of martyrs."³ For these Burton has written his book, and the classification is so universal that he may be said to include all mankind. With this he ends his *Address to the Reader*, which gives a half-mocking, half-serious introduction to the seven hundred and twenty-three pages which follow.

The *Anatomy* is carefully divided into three parts, and every part is subdivided into *sections*, each of which contains one or more *members* and several *subsections*. The author is thus enabled to follow the plan of structural anatomy, and so to give a delusive appearance of scientific construction to his book. Each *part* is preceded by an elaborate *synopsis* of the contents, which enables the reader to see at a glance the exactness of the arrangement, and the general method of the treatment of the subject in hand. Dividing his theme thus, Burton, with some humour, much sense, and a host of quotations to illustrate in some cases the most obvious facts, has produced a work which has been a mine for lesser scholars, who have borrowed from his pages for many generations and for the most part without acknowledgment. It is not always easy to perceive when the learned author is laugh-

¹ "Democritus to the Reader," p. 63.

² *Idem*, p. 69.

³ *Idem*, pp. 69-78.

ing in his sleeve at his reader, who wades perforce up to his neck through citations from the classics, from the Fathers, from writers unknown and known of the Middle Ages, from contemporary poets, English and European—in short, from every available source, and from some that are no longer available to-day,—and who comes out panting and perplexed to find himself on the flat shore of commonplace in the end. It cannot with any justice be asserted that Burton was making a vain man's display of his learning; but it may be fairly judged that, writing to please himself, he took a delight in accumulating authorities likely and unlikely to support statements which no man could reasonably dispute. At the same time he may have had an eye to the feelings of his reader, and have smiled grimly to himself at the perplexity which he was causing by his method. He wrote to cure himself, if possible, with only a secondary care for any who might read him, and he ended by pleasing all the learned men of his land for a century after his death.

The first *Partition* deals with the *Causes of Melancholy*, and occupies in the fifth edition two hundred and eighteen folio pages. With some of these Burton was well acquainted, and others he had learned from his study of medicine. The first *Section* treats of diseases in general, and is divided into three *Members*, of which the first treats of the causes of such diseases. The first cause is piously set down to Adam's Fall, which, like Pandora's box, is said to be the source of all the ills to which flesh is heir.¹ But such sicknesses are to be avoided for the most part by a wise use of the predictions of astrology, though these will not serve against "the knaveries, impostures, injuries and villainies of men,"² of which the arts of witches, magicians and the like were a continual evidence. Neither could such ailments as come by heredity be avoided,³ though they might be alleviated by wise attention. All these evils physical and moral lead directly to melancholy, which is perhaps the greatest of all of them. Having thus laid down a sufficiently broad basis on which to build his treatise, Burton proceeds to define, to number and classify diseases, after premising that every man has some "impediment of body or mind." These he divides into sicknesses of the body, which he reckons up as three hundred

¹ Part. I. Sect. I. Memb. i. Subsect. 1, p. 2.

² *Idem ibidem*, p. 5.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 6.

in number, and diseases of the mind.¹ Having laid down his first division, he goes on to say that there are five kinds of diseases of the head: there are such as come from the brain and show themselves in an *outward* fashion, “as baldness, falling of the hair, furfur, lice, &c.,” and there are *inward* ailments, which belong “to the skin next to the brain, called *dura* and *pia mater*, as all headaches,” and which belong to the *ventricles*, such as *apoplexy*. Next there are diseases of the head which arise from the *nerves*, such as *palsy*, from *excrements of brain*, which include *catarrh* and *sneezing*, and from the *substance* of the brain, of which the worst is *melancholy*. Some of these, such as the last, belong to the mind as much as to the body.² The author then proceeds to treat of such mental diseases as dotage, frenzy, madness, St. Vitus’s dance, extasy and hydrophobia, for the last of which he mentions the country cure of sousing the patient “over head and ears in sea-water.”³ To support him in his conclusions he appeals to such grave and reverend authorities as Zeigler, Avicenna, Schernitz, Hildesheim and others, to say nothing of Galen and Hippocrates. Lastly, he deals with melancholy in disposition, which he rightly calls a habit of the mind.⁴

The second *Member* contains a digression on anatomy, which gives an interesting summary of the knowledge of that science in Burton’s time, and in which the author displays to much advantage his remarkably varied acquirements. He divides the body, according to the fashion of his time, into humours, of which there are four—blood, phlegm, choler and melancholy—and into spirits. Of these humours melancholy is said to be a bridle to the blood and choler, “preserving them in the blood and nourishing the bones,” a somewhat startling statement, which will not bear severe scrutiny. The spirits, on the other hand, “are subtle vapours, instruments of the soul.”⁵ Once more the body is divided into *similar parts*, such as the bones and nerves, apparently because the nerves are stretched over the bones, and into *dissimilar parts*, such as the skull, face, heart, brain, and liver.⁶ Having thus appor-

¹ Part. I. Sect. I. Memb. i. Subsect. 2, pp. 6, 7.

² *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 3, pp. 7, 8.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 4, pp. 8–10, especially p. 10.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 5, pp. 11–13.

⁵ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. Subsect. 1, p. 15.

⁶ *Idem ibidem*, Subsects. 3, 4, pp. 16–19.

tioned the physical organs of the body, Burton proceeds to describe the soul, which is tripartite, consisting of the *vegetal*, which is possessed by plants, the *sensible*, which, with the vegetal, is the living force of animals, and the *rational*, which, in company with the two others, forms the vital principle and thinking faculty of man.¹ The sensible soul contains, first, the *outward senses*,—namely, the five which receive their impressions from the external world,—and, secondly, the *inward senses*, which are so called “because they be within the brain-pan,” and consist of common sense, fancy and memory. Common sense is further defined as the judge of impressions, and is said to sit in “the fore-part of the brain”; fancy makes a fuller examination of and retains these impressions, of which memory is the appointed store-house.² In addition to these constituents of the sensitive soul, there is a third and most important factor in its well-being, which is denominated the *moving faculty*, and which is divided between motion and appetite. Of these animals are possessed as well as man, and they may be said to make up instinct and the ordinary properties of non-rational life.³ But the sensitive soul is only an instrument of the *rational soul*, which pertains to man alone, and which is made up of the understanding and the will.⁴

Having at length reached the part most affected, Burton sets out on his arduous task of defining melancholy, and he begins, like many less learned men, by saying what it is not. But the process of elimination is not commonly a satisfactory aid to exactness of definition, and though Democritus Junior indulges his reader with vivid descriptions of the symptoms and results of melancholy, he has left no simple statement of what it is. It is not madness, though the brain and the heart are the parts of the body chiefly affected by this dismal disease of the mind. Still, any kind of physical disarrangement of the natural organs tends to produce mental sicknesses, and amongst them melancholy: “For our body is like a clock; if one wheel be amiss, all the rest are disordered, the whole fabric suffers: with such admirable art and harmony is

¹ Part I. Sect. I. Memb. ii. Subsects. 5, 6, pp. 20–23.

² *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 7, pp. 23, 24.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. Subsect. 8, pp. 24, 25.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, Subsects. 8–11, pp. 26–30.

man composed.”¹ But the source and character of melancholy, Burton confesses, are much disputed: the chief of the medical giants and the army of philosophers are unable to agree as to whether these are material or immaterial, composed of four humours or of three only.² Nor does he trouble to decide the vexed question, but quotes his authorities with a grave waggishness, and coolly leaves his reader to take his choice amongst them. In this course of procedure he was wise in his generation, though it must be confessed a little aggravating, as the patient reader is apt to agree with each of the authorities cited until he has read the next. Lastly, he brings his first section to an end with a disquisition on the various kinds of melancholy. Of these there are three—namely, *head-melancholy*, in which the brain is chiefly affected; melancholy of the *whole body*, in which the evil genius is impartial in its attack; and, lastly, there is melancholy of the bowels,³ from which holy Richard Baxter may be said to have suffered when he robbed an orchard in company with less conscientious schoolfellows, and partook too liberally of the fruits of his plunder.

Having thus made a high-road for himself to the heart of his theme, Burton goes on to describe in great detail the causes of melancholy, which may be either supernatural or natural. Beginning with the first of these two main divisions, he reverently and fearfully ascribes the first supernatural cause as God Himself, either directly or indirectly, by the agency of the devil. Then he makes a long digression on the fruitful theme of spirits,⁴ in which he anticipates some of the superstitions of modern spiritualists. Lucifer, the ex-archangel, he asserts, fell from heaven, and was made to rule over six kinds of devils or evil spirits, who were the direct causes of melancholy by their wicked machinations. First, there are fiery devils, such as Will-o'-the-wisps, whose uncomfortable abode is in active volcanoes, such as Hecla, Ætna, Lipari or Stromboli, Vesuvius, and the like. Secondly, there are aërial devils, who spend their windy existence in causing tempests and similar airy commotions. Thirdly, in defiance of poetical chivalry, the water-nymphs are relegated to

¹ Part I. Sect. I. Memb. iii. Subsects. 1, 2, pp. 31, 32.

² *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 3, pp. 33, 34.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 4, pp. 35, 36.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, Sect. II. Subsects. 1 and 2, pp. 37-54.

the ranks of devils. Fourth, come the terrestrial devils, who amongst their ranks contain a large number of once famous beings, such as genies, fauns, satyrs, foliots, Robin Good-fellows, and possibly fairies. The fifth class of devils consists of those subterranean beings which are to be found in mines, and whose occupation is to watch over hidden treasures. The sixth order of devils is made up of those "which are conversant about the centre of the earth to torture the souls of damned men to the Day of Judgment."¹ That Burton really believed in all these representatives of devildom may be well doubted; but he certainly was convinced of the truth of possession. One illustration which he gives is too curious to be lightly passed by. He tells, on the authority of Cornelius Gemma, a noted physician, the sad story of a young maiden named Katherine Gualter, a cooper's daughter, who was so possessed in 1571. She "had such strange passions and convulsions. Three men could not sometimes hold her; she purged a live eel, which he saw, a foot and a half long, and touched himself. But the eel afterward vanished. She vomited some twenty-four pounds of fulsome stuff of all colours twice a day for fourteen days; and after that she voided great balls of hair, pieces of wood, pigeon's dung, parchment, goose dung, coals; and after them two pound of pure blood, and then again coals and stones, of which some had inscriptions bigger than a walnut, some of them pieces of glass, brass, &c., besides paroxysms of laughing, weeping, and extacies, &c."² Well might the unhappy demoniac suffer from such paroxysms, to say nothing of those which are covered by Burton's liberal &c. That such a story could be put forward in the name of a known physician speaks much for the omnivorous credulity of an age which would seem to have been able to swallow as large a variety of curiosities as the unlucky Katherine was said to have got rid of in her own peculiar fashion. Well might Burton, if he really believed the story, which he relates with his own admirable gravity, pronounce that devils were the causes of melancholy.

Like James I., Democritus Junior believed in the powers of witches and magicians to produce other mischief and

¹ Part. I. Sect. II. Memb. i. Subsect. 2, p. 50.

² *Idem ibidem*, p. 53.

to cause melancholy.¹ Moreover, being so confirmed an astrologer himself as to give a planetary sign to each of the sections of his work, to say nothing of his casting his own nativity, he naturally asserted that the stars had their influence in producing melancholy. The signs of this disease, he goes on to say, may be discerned from the study of physiognomy, metoposcopy, chiromancy, and similar superstitious arts. Black colour, leanness, hirsuteness, red colour, stuttering, and baldness were sure indications in his view of melancholy of the head.² Further causes were old age and heredity, and to avoid such diseases as are handed on from parents to children, he wisely recommends restraints in marriage of unsuitable persons or invalids.³ His advice gains force from the fact that he was not married himself, though whether he refrained because of his shyness, or because he was afraid of handing on his hereditary melancholy, does not appear in the scanty records of his life. He himself gives no indication to assist conjecture on this interesting point; but whatever may have been his reason for celibacy, it must be admitted that his condemnation of promiscuous matrimony is both wise and salutary. At this point he leaves supernatural causes of melancholy, having dilated upon them at sufficient length to frighten the careless into good conduct and to flatter the self-restraint of the careful liver. How far he was setting down his own opinions in each case, and how far he was playing his part of Democritus and laughing in his sleeve at his exalted authorities, may be a matter of argument. But there can be no question that in his grave and carefully digested enumeration he displays much learning, with a substratum of common sense, in spite of much that appears superstitious in a scientific age like the present, which has its own besetting superstition of incredulity.

Burton continues his investigation by a careful examination of the *natural causes* of melancholy. He first deals with what he calls adventitious causes, such as bad diet, which is harmful either in its substance or in its quality. These adventitious causes are six in number of non-natural things, by which the author does not mean supernatural, but things which do not of necessity relate to the body in

¹ Part. I. Sect. II. Memb. i. Subsects. 3-5, pp. 54-60.

² *Idem ibidem*, p. 59.

³ *Idem ibidem*, pp. 60-65, especially p. 65, near the top.

its healthy state, or which are supplied to the body from without. Diet, retention and evacuation, air, exercise, sleeping, waking, and perturbations of the mind are all causes of melancholy, which can be avoided or cured by common care.¹ He gives a long list of kinds of food which are to be rigorously eschewed, such as beef, pork, red deer, milk and its products, and wild fowl, of which he remarks, with more force than compliment, "Though these be fair in feathers, pleasant in taste, and have a good outside, like hypocrites, white in plumes, and soft, their flesh is hard, unwholesome, dangerous, melancholy meat."² Certain kinds of fish, too, make bad food, and certain sorts of vegetables are equally provocative of indigestion and melancholy; garlick, onions and potatoes, fruit of almost every kind, spices and the like provoke wind, and so produce melancholy. Among liquors, too, all black wines such as alicante, rich drinks like brown-bastard, metheglin, cider and perry, to say nothing of standing water, are guilty of the same offence. But Burton, though a water-drinker, puts in a plea for good beer, the soothing virtues of which he would seem to have tested in his more regenerate days. "But let them say as they list," he remarks, "to such as are accustomed to it, *'tis a most wholesome* (so Polydore Virgil, Lib. I., calleth it) *and a pleasant drink*. It is more subtle for the hop that rarifies it, hath an especial virtue against melancholy, as our herbalists confess."³ Let teetotalers read, mark, and inwardly digest the foregoing and the fluid, assorting each substantive to its appropriate verb. Lastly, amongst his kinds of diet to be avoided, he especially mentions black puddings as unwholesome, by which the antiquity of that homely but toothsome delicacy is plainly proved.

Burton next goes on to show that over-eating, which appears to have been as prevalent in his day as in our more enlightened age, is one of the most frequent causes of melancholy.⁴ That this is true no victim of an overloaded digestive apparatus, to use a sonorous and polite expression, will venture to deny, though he may not have force enough of will to control his unruly appetite. In addition to a too omnivorous faculty, our author points

¹ Part. I. Sect. II. Memb. ii. Subsect. 1, pp. 65-72.

² *Idem ibidem*, p. 67.

³ *Idem ibidem*, p. 71.

⁴ *Idem*, Subsect. 2, pp. 72-75.

out that the custom of diet, the delight in certain kinds of food, may provoke or dispel melancholy, while necessity, with her Hobson's choice, may do either the one or the other, as occasion serves.¹ Then what he politely calls retention and evacuation may tend to the end of producing, instead of dispelling, melancholy. Bad air too, overmuch exercise, solitary habits, idleness, customary or enforced, and other pieces of negligence may cause the same sad results.² "A young man," he remarks, with perfect truth and some beauty, "is like a fair new house: the carpenter leaves it well built, in good repair, of solid stuff; but a bad tenant lets it rain in, and for want of reparation fall to decay, &c. Our parents, tutors, friends spare no cost to bring us up in our youth in all manner of virtuous education; but when we are left to ourselves, idleness as a tempest drives all virtuous motions out of our minds, *et nihil sumus*, on a sudden by sloth and such bad ways we come to naught."³ But idleness is not the only vice which brings its own punishment with it; too much sleep is productive of the same consequences, and that is a vice much practised by all young people, who have the opportunity in their own hands. So too the opposite failing, for vice it cannot be fairly called, of sleeplessness tends in the same direction, and causes its victim to experience the bitterness of melancholy.⁴

Having thus descanted at length and with some appearance of scientific method upon bodily causes of melancholy, Burton details the mental causes in part from his own sad experience and in part from the writings of a host of authorities, famous and unknown. The passions and the perturbations of the mind, he asserts with sound sense, disturb its even working and cause much distress to the ill-regulated person.⁵ He then enters upon a considerable digression to demonstrate the force of the imagination and its effects upon the human temper.⁶ Having detailed these to his own satisfaction, he divides the perturbations into two classes, *irascible* and *concupiscible*, and proceeds to treat at large on the effects of sorrow, fear, shame and disgrace, envy, malice, hatred, emulation,

¹ Part. I. Sect. II. Memb. ii. Subsect. 3, pp. 76-78.

² *Idem ibidem*, pp. 78-90.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 6, p. 87.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 7, pp. 90, 91.

⁵ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. iii. Subsect. 1, pp. 89-91.

⁶ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 2, pp. 91-96.

faction, revenge, anger, discontents, cares and miseries as causes of melancholy.¹ In the midst of his disquisition he comments with a half-mocking, half-serious despair on the difficulties of choosing a profession. "For particular professions," he remarks with much pungency, "I hold as of the rest there's no content or security in any. On what course will you pitch, how resolve? To be a divine, 'tis contemptible in the world's esteem; to be a lawyer, 'tis to be a wrangler; to be a physician, *pudet lotii*, 'tis loathed; a philosopher, a madman; an alchemist, a beggar; a poet, *esurit*, an hungry Jack; a musician, a player; a schoolmaster, a drudge; an husbandman, an emmet; a merchant, his gains are uncertain; a mechanician, base; a chirurgeon, fulsome; a tradesman, a liar; a smith, or a metalman, the pot's never from's nose; a courtier, a parasite; as he could find no tree in the wood to hang himself, I can show no state of life to give content."² The foregoing passage is a favourable example of Burton's forcible style when he is speaking for himself, and his reader wishes that he would do so with greater frequency, though in a less melancholy strain than he uses on the present occasion. The rest of the picture of the sorrows and dangers of every form of human life is painted in still darker colours, and it is obvious that the author had his fit upon him when he was writing.

Having thus explained the irascible perturbations of the mind, Burton continues to detail their concupiscible fellows, which he enumerates with manifest relish and suitable comments and illustrations.³ Desires, ambitions, covetousness, love of gaming, immoderate pleasures, self-love, vain-glory, longing for praise, honour, excessive applause, pride, extreme joy, and overmuch study are all forms of these, and are duly rated at their true worth. He concludes this portion of his subdivision by a pathetic episode on the misery of scholars,⁴ in which he quotes almost verbatim from Sir Thomas Overbury's aphorism of "A mere scholar is an intelligible ass," which he intensifies into a proverb, "A mere scholar, a mere ass."

¹ Part. I. Sect. II. Memb. iii. Subsects. 3-10, pp. 96-111. N.B.—The pagination is inexact at this point, as at several others of the *Anatomy*. Pages 89, 90 appear twice; pages 96 and 97 also appear twice, while page 92 is followed by page 95.

² *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 10, pp. 110, 111.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Subsects. 11-15, pp. 112-141.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 15, pp. 128-141. Cf. Overbury, *Works*, p. 87.

The fierce indignation of his pages recalls that of Peacham, already quoted,¹ and his picture of the poor scholar's life is pitiful in the extreme. He rounds off this striking passage with a piece of strong and masterful Latin, which shows how powerfully he would have written in that language had he chosen to do so, as he had once intended. His condemnation of the class of average patrons is terrible in its scathing denunciation. He does not pause to pick his words, and there can be no question that those starvers of poor clergymen and needy schoolmasters deserved all that he had to say about their iniquities. "A base, profane, Epicurean, hypocritical rout," he exclaims, "for my part, let them pretend what zeal they will, counterfeit religion, blear the world's eyes, bombast themselves, and stuff out their greatness with Church-spoils, shine like so many peacocks; so cold is my charity, so defective in this behalf, that I shall never think better of them than that they are rotten at the core, their bones are full of Epicurean hypocrisy and atheistical marrow, that they are worse than heathens."² There is more to the same purpose, and the quiet scholar, who was himself removed from the reach of want, but who could see his learned fellows starved by the contemptible meanness of the patrons of livings, only gathers strength as the torrent of his denunciation flows along. Surely some of those whom he deluged with furious condemnation must have writhed and choked beneath the burning flood of his fiery language.

Leaving the patrons to recover from the ferocity of his onslaught, Democritus Junior turns his attention to a perhaps less exciting theme. He speaks of the *non-necessary* causes of melancholy, which he sets forth in full detail. The folly of nurses with their terrible tales, the impulse of terror, scoffs, calumnies, bitter jests, loss of liberty, slavery, imprisonment, poverty and want, accidents, the death of friends, losses, superstitious fears, over-anxiety and curiosity (in the sense, of course, of exaggerated care in trifles) all tend to one end.³ Similarly there are many inward causes of the same disease; the

¹ *Vide supra*, pp. 1-5. That Burton had not seen Peacham's *Compleat Gentleman* is possible, but it is more than probable that Peacham had read and enjoyed Burton's *Anatomy*.

² Part. I. Sect. II. Memb. iii. Subsect. 15, p. 137.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. iv. Subsects. 1-7, pp. 142-172.

body works on the mind, the heart, the humours, and on the spirits, causing fits of depression and periods of gloom.¹ Particular parts are affected with sickness, such as the brain, the midriff and the liver. Head-melancholy, for instance, is often caused by a brain over-heated, or over-cold, and those who suffer from this terrible complaint are warned with much prudence to avoid spices, hot wines, garlic and bad air, and, perhaps with less wisdom, hot baths. Windy melancholy again arises from dyspepsia, which has its woeful seat in the liver, and whose courtiers are bad diet, care, griefs and such things, as set the body out of order. Indeed, the whole body, if it be not temperately governed, acts upon the mind by what Burton would call *inward causes* of melancholy, and makes the sufferer all but distraught. "Now go and brag of thy present happiness, whosoever thou art," he says with contemptuous humour, "brag of thy temperature, of thy good parts, insult, triumph, and boast; thou seest in what a brittle state thou art, how soon thou mayest be dejected, how many several ways, by bad diet, bad air, a small loss, a little sorrow or discontent, or ague, &c., how many sudden accidents may procure thy ruin, what a small tenure of happiness thou hast in this life, how weak and silly a creature thou art. *Humble thyself, therefore, under the mighty hand of God* (1 Pet. v. 6), know thyself, acknowledge thy present misery, and make right use of it. *Qui stat, videat, ne cadat*. Thou dost now flourish, and hast *bona animi, corporis et fortunæ*, goods of body, mind and fortune, *nescis quid serus secum vesper ferat*, thou knowst not what storms the late evening may bring with it. Be not secure then, *be sober and watch, fortunam reverenter habe* (Ausonius), if fortunate and rich; if sick and poor, moderate thyself."¹

The third section of the *Anatomy* treats of the various symptoms of melancholy, and the reader cannot fail to be struck with their number and universality. The first set of these with bodily symptoms is minutely described, and is to be seen especially in the changing hues of the complexion. If the skin is too dark and swarthy, too pale or too flushed, too hairy or too smooth, the patient is sure to be suffering from melancholy in a more or less acute form.² Next there are *mental* symptoms,³ which are in-

¹ Part. I. Sect. II. Memb. v. Subsects. 1-5, pp. 172-178.

² *Idem*, Sect. III. Memb. i. Subsect. 1, pp. 178-180.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 2, pp. 180-190.

finite in number. There is the fear of death, the influence of devils, hypochondria, nightmare, and unexplained and inexplicable sorrow. Then there are various signs of the influence of the stars upon the parts of the body, and the four humours; there are the effects of ill-considered education, the continuance of time in sickness or unhappy circumstances, and the positive inclination to brood over human events. Melancholy is pleasant at first, and unreflecting men and women are apt to give way to its soothing influence.¹ But as it gains in power it increases in misery, until at last it overcomes the mind, and with it the body too. Such are the general symptoms of misery generally treated, and Burton proceeds to display them in detail. First, the indications of head melancholy are such things as a flushed face, red eyes, and severe headaches. Windy melancholy, on the other hand, is shown by unreasonable timorousness or sorrow, by ringing in the ears, vertigo, and especially by a diseased liver.² This ailment would seem to be a form of hypochondria, which is more frequent than is sometimes imagined. But the whole body, too, gives signs of its sickness, when it is black, the veins broad and the blood thick. Maids, nuns and widows are especially subject to melancholy,³ and Burton details the distinguishing symptoms with much of the skill of a ladies' physician. How an old bachelor could derive knowledge so precise for its date does not appear, since he could know but little of the gentler sex by actual contact with them. But he shows that he understood their meagrimms well and in a manner which could scarcely have been derived from books alone. The immediate causes of these symptoms he ascribes to black vapours in the system, and, in the case of lovers, to their long meditation upon one fascinating subject. He then concludes his first *Partition* with an account of the *prognostics* of melancholy, which are either good, as they relate to its possible cure, or bad, as they forewarn the patient of its approach, which is often shown by a desire of suicide.⁴

The second *Partition* of the *Anatomy* deals with the cure of melancholy, which he was better able to describe than to use in his own case. Burton first examines and

¹ Part. I. Sect. III. Memb. i. Subsect. 3, pp. 190-198.

² *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. Subsects. 1, 2, pp. 198-201.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. Subsect. 4, and Memb. iii. pp. 202-205, and pp. 205-212. ⁴ *Idem ibidem*, Sect. IV. pp. 212-218.

rejects unlawful cures, such as resort to evil spirits, magicians, witches, and similar persons of evil repute in this world and of worse in the next. Lawful cures are to be found in prayer to God and in the wise use of physic; but prayer to saints is in itself foolish and a relic of Romanist superstition. On every convenient occasion Democritus Junior shows himself to be a sound Protestant, though by no means a Puritan, and he ascribes Romanist traditions in plain terms to the devil and his imps.¹ Having thus prepared the ground for his suggested remedies, he sets out on his difficult task with a sober waggishness which is highly instructive and amusing. He speaks of the physician, the patient, and the physic to be taken with a common sense only marred by some astrological absurdities, which shows that he was justified in claiming some skill in medicine. It is the patient's first duty, he urges, to get a good doctor, to take his disease in time, and cheerfully to trust to the ability of his medical adviser. He has some contempt for those patients who are suffering from their own fancied ailments. Some put off consulting their physician until it is too late; but "many again are in that other extreme too profuse, suspicious, and jealous of their health; too apt to take physic on every small occasion, to aggravate every slender passion, imperfection, impediment; if their finger do but ache, run, ride, send for a physician, as many gentlewomen do that are sick without a cause, even when they will themselves, upon every toy or small discontent, and when he comes they make it worse than it is by amplifying that which is not."² In no case must the patient "practise upon himself," but he must take such physic as is prescribed with such gusto as he can muster.³ It seems strange, but true, that Burton has nothing to say of the medical works of Andrew Boorde, whom he must surely have read, both as an Oxford worthy and as a man of much knowledge in his craft. But probably he was too busy with the Latin and Greek writers to trouble himself to consult an English authority.

The patient having been thus exhorted in a preliminary fashion, he is next informed of certain *dietetical cures* which may serve his turn. He must not eat too much,

¹ Part. II. Sect. I. Membs. i.-iii. pp. 219-226.

² *Idem ibidem*, Memb. iv. Subsect. 2, p. 229.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. iv. pp. 226-231.

and he must take care to avoid all indigestible food, such as is the tasty product of the frying-pan. He must be equally careful in the kind of water which he drinks, and he would do well to choose clean rain-water, or that spring water which rises in and flows towards the east. The water of the New River, the works of which had been recently engineered by Sir Hugh Middleton, is spoken of with commendation, and the feat of its construction meets with a well-deserved eulogium. Passing from water to its inhabitants, Burton commends such fish as are produced by gravelly waters, like perch, pike, trout, and flounders, as useful and harmless to eat. The same praise is bestowed upon "sweet fruits, such as cherries, apples, pears, and pippins, preserved cherries, plums, and marmalade of plums," which are said to "keep down the wind."¹ Passing on to quantity in diet, Burton notes by the way that "melancholy men most part have good appetites but ill digestion." It is, therefore, wise for them to regulate their diet, and to pay special attention to "retention and evacuation." Some may be helped by baths, hot or cold, and for some forms of melancholy marriage is the only cure.² The sound sense of most of these cautions and recommendations will commend itself to the dyspeptic reader, who will be reminded of the strict attention paid to diet by the professors of the harmless science of homœopathy. Whether the author practised what he preached, or whether he was merely laying down rules for others to observe, cannot now be ascertained; but this much is certain, that he was not able to cure himself with his own suggested remedies, either taken singly or in agreeable succession.

With wise perception Burton next turns his attention to the need of good air, and this portion of the *Anatomy* contains a highly interesting digression on air and climate.³ He gives, in brief, a treatise on astronomy, physical geography, and physiography, in so far as these sciences were known in his day, and his knowledge shows both wide reading and much general accuracy. He warns the man who is about to build a house to look out for a site where there is good air, and so to build his house that he may secure the greatest amount of fresh air without excess.

¹ Part. II. Sect. II. Memb. i. pp. 228-237.

² *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. pp. 237-240.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Membs. iii., iv. pp. 240-283.

The chamber-windows should, as far as possible, face the north, east, or south, but never the west, which is a damp and wet quarter, and the winds from which are neither healthful in themselves nor health-giving. When the house is built and life in the country is begun, great care must be taken to use the surrounding fresh air by wise and moderate exercise. Amongst other pursuits, he commends fishing with a zeal which none but a practitioner of the gentle art could have felt. "Because hawking and hunting are very laborious, much riding and many dangers accompany them," he remarks, "but this is still and quiet; and if so be the angler catch no fish, yet he hath a wholesome walk to the brookside, pleasant shade by the sweet, silver streams; he hath good air, and sweet smells of fine fresh meadow-flowers; he hears the melodious harmony of birds; he sees the swans, herons, ducks, water-hens, coots, &c., and many other fowl with their brood, which he thinketh better than the noise of the hounds or blast of horns, and all the sport that they can make."¹ Such a poetical rhapsody speaks of an angler's soul, and the language used is choice and finely expressed. Purple patches of this kind are rare in the *Anatomy*, but when they do occur they prove beyond question Burton's poetical love of nature.

The next trouble to engage his attention is waking and terrible dreams, which he says may be cured, as doubtless they may, by sound sleep, a light supper and pleasant thoughts before retiring to rest. When a man's mind is perturbed let him struggle against his oppression and use the comforting counsel of a friend to minister to his grief. Music, too, will help such a sufferer; nor are mirth, congenial company and beautiful objects to be despised in this connection. Burton concludes this part of his theme by a "consolatory digression," which suggests remedies and comfortable reflections to the troubled mind.² He next shows how general discontents and grievances may be satisfied by fortitude. Deformity, sickness, base birth, peculiar discontents, poverty, want, servitude, imprisonment, banishment, loss of friends by death, vain fears, envy, jealousy, hatred and the like, scorn, abuse, injuries, slander, and melancholy itself are all curable by patience, prayer, fortitude, and some of them by medicine.³

¹ Part. II. Sect. II. Membs. iii., iv., p. 266.

² *Idem ibidem*, Memb. v. pp. 283-303.

³ *Idem*, Sect. III. pp. 303-357.

From these griefs he passes on to those which are to be remedied by the wise use of physic. During his disquisition on medicine he deals somewhat harshly with many of the physicians of his time, who practised for what they could get and with no sufficient desire to heal their patients. Tonics and purges are helpful to get rid of melancholy, but foreign drugs are not always to be trusted for this purpose. In speaking of herbs, on the authority of Gerard, to whom he appeals, and of others, he mentions especially such simples as borage, bugloss, balm, betony, marigold, hop, wormwood, centaury, endive, dandelion, succory, fumitory, roses, violets, capers, feverfew and woundwort as sovereign remedies for certain of the diseases which stimulate melancholy. Nearly all of these are tonics, and they have found their way singly or in combination into many a modern patent medicine. Similar tonics are gems, metals and minerals; carbuncles and coral, for instance, are remedies against fears and devils; emeralds and sapphires calm the mind, while gold is good for melancholy. But Burton has no faith in compound tonics, which he seems to think are little better than poison.¹

He next reviews purges,² which he divides into three classes, *upward*, *downward* and *compound* purges. Amongst the first of these, laurel, squills, white hellebore and antimony are excellent, and one must not be omitted, the virtues of which schoolboys have often tried surreptitiously and succumbed more than once, until custom has dulled its emetic force. “*Tobacco*, divine, rare, super-excellent *tobacco*, which goes far beyond all their panaceas, potable gold and philosophers’ stones, a sovereign remedy to all diseases. A good vomit, I confess, a virtuous herb, if it be well qualified, opportunely taken and medicinally used; but as it is commonly abused by most men, which take it as tinkers do ale, ’tis a plague and a mischief, a violent purger of goods, lands, health; hellish, devilish and damned *tobacco*, the ruin and overthrow of body and soul.”³ Having thus delivered himself, he proceeds to recommend as *downward purges* polypody, fumitory, broom, half-boiled cabbage, lapis lazuli and black hellebore. *Compound purges*, such as electuaries, confections

¹ Part. II. Sect. IV. Memb. i. pp. 358–371.

² *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. pp. 372–378.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Subsect. 1, p. 374.

and pills, are good in certain cases, but they must be taken with caution. In addition to these comparatively violent methods of expelling melancholy, the surgeon can also assist the sufferer by the judicious use of the lancet, horse-leeches and cauterics.¹ The list of simples and compounds, and of processes of remedial action is sufficiently long and terrible to frighten the great fiend himself, let alone the solitary goddess of melancholy. He who took them all and survived would surely have no reason to complain of melancholy, or indeed of any of the ills to which flesh is heir. He would have experienced a varied and bitter course of treatment, and his unfortunate digestive organs would have been like an apothecary's shop, until the works of the drastic drugs were brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Realizing that head melancholy was perhaps the most dangerous form of the disease, Burton sets down several suggested cures in a separate section, which is extended to cover some other similar ailments.² Blood-letting, *preparatives* and purges, *aversers* such as sneezing, tonics and cordials, and a cup of wine, though he himself was a water-drinker, are all recommended. Another remedy is suggested with some diffidence:—"The Turks have a drink called *coffee* (for they use no wine), so named from a berry as black as soot, and as bitter (like that black drink which was in use amongst the Lacedæmonians, and perhaps the same), which they sip still of, and sup as warm as they can suffer: they spend much time in those *coffee-houses*, which are somewhat like our ale-houses or taverns, and there they sit chatting and drinking to drive away the time, and to be merry together, because they find by experience that kind of drink so helpeth digestion, and procureth alacrity. Some of them take opium to this purpose." For melancholy over the whole body, bleeding, and purging with sow-thistle, succory, senna and other soothing herbs are recommended, while angelica, elecampane, penny-royal, and that delicious beverage of ancient spinsterhood, chamomile-decoction, are serviceable to expel wind and costiveness. Such are the medical remedies which Democritus Junior in his wisdom somewhat maliciously recommends to melancholy persons, and he supports his advice by a host of authorities and a

¹ Part. II. Sect. IV. Memb. iii. pp. 378, 379.

² *Idem*, Sect. V. pp. 379-398.

whole army of primeval herbalists. Let those take them who will, and may they derive untold benefit from their decoctions and the rest; there are some remedies which are worse than the disease, and the sage adviser may be left in the Elysian Fields weaving herb-chains and crowned with a chaplet of chamomile.

Burton having dealt with ordinary types of his theme, devotes the third *Partition* of his work to Love-melancholy and Religious melancholy. Some authorities have imagined that he was indebted for this section of his work to Jacques Ferrand, Doctor of Physic, who, in 1612, published his *Traité de l'Essence et Guérison de l'Amour*, and twelve years later, his *De la Maladie de l'Amour, ou Melancholie Erotique*, at Paris. Burton¹ expressly states that he had not seen this work until the first edition of his *Anatomy* was published, and though he may have derived hints therefrom for some of his revised editions, he has much improved upon the work of the French physician. He begins this third partition with an interesting preface on love in general, seasoning his discourse with a plentiful sprinkling of quotations both in the text and on the margin. He next shows how love begins, what are its common objects, how it has been defined, and into what divisions it may be apportioned.² He then turns his attention to the love of men, wherein he commends honesty, but severely condemns the laxity which he could see from his study-window in the world of his day. He describes the pleasant objects of love, such as beautiful scenery and pet animals, and speaks with some eloquence of the honest objects of love, which are to be found in virtue, wisdom and honesty itself.³ From these he moves forward to the characterization of charity, by which he does not mean that virtue which becomes an illegitimate adjective to Anniversary Sermons. Using charity in the apostolic sense, he declares that it is made up of pleasant, honourable and profitable love, and illustrates his meaning by a quotation from the *Faery Queene*.⁴ Indeed, it is only in this third partition of his *Anatomy* that he quotes to any extent from the English poets, such as Marlow, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Lydgate, George Wither,

¹ Part. III. Sect. II. Memb. ii. p. 444.

² *Idem*, Sect. I. Memb. i. pp. 402-412.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. pp. 413-422.

⁴ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. iv. pp. 422-429.

Daniel, Ben Jonson, Buchanan, Harington and Drayton. But he shows in other parts of his work that he had read and enjoyed the literature of his own country, the influence of which may be traced in many of the thoughts and expressions, which he sets down in his narrative. It still remains questionable if he had ever loved a woman as she ought to be loved ; and his advice appears generally to come rather from external observation of the proprieties of the case than from actual experience. But personal ignorance of the tender passion, if such was his benighted state, never deters him from speaking with considerable strength of its weaknesses, and his advice is always worthy of attention, since lovers are not commonly the wisest of the race.

Burton treats next of *Heroical* or *Love-Melancholy*, and begins by tracing its pedigree with mischievous minuteness to its ultimate source in the devil. Heroical love, he contends, is an unfailing source of melancholy, though in itself it is commendable, in spite of its tyranny. But if it degenerate into lust, it is not only injurious, but positively sinful. It holds its court and has its throne in the front part of the brain, and though its sway be tyrannical, it must itself be kept under strict control.¹ Such love, he unkindly asserts, has its sources in commonplace characteristics like the temperature of the body, while it may be caused by full diet, by idleness, by propinquity, and by climate. Melancholy too, the sight of some fair one and her surpassing personal charms may produce the same effect of lust.² These are what he calls natural causes, and no one will deny that all of them have their own influence in awakening the tender passion in the unsuspecting bosom. But there are certain *artificial* causes which provoke the animal portion of love, if they do not cause its spiritual part. Certain gestures, amongst which he includes the language of the eyes, fine clothes, a prospective dower, importunity, opportunity, bribes, promises, tears, the wiles of bawds and love-philtres, all play their part to provoke passion.³ The symptoms of love are clear to careless observers, and they belong both to the body and mind. Paleness, inattention to surrounding matters, ungartered hose, lack of appetite, frequent sighs, and sleeplessness,

¹ Part. III. Sect. II. Memb. i. pp. 429-443.

² *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. pp. 443-464.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. iii. pp. 464-499.

are amongst these symptoms, and they are the characteristics in a greater or less degree of most lovers.¹ From symptoms Burton passes on to such *prognostics* of cure as they involve, and he manifestly has little hope of any ultimate success in weeding out the obnoxious passion.²

He does, however, indicate some possible remedies, which may or may not be of use to those who suffer from love-melancholy. First of all there is hard work, which certainly has its influence in this direction. Then there are cooling draughts of medicine and fasting. The judicious use of cucumbers, purslane, melons, rue, lettuce, water-lilies, and other cooling vegetables is highly commended. If these fail, the sufferer must avoid the occasion of love, sternly repress its beginnings, change the place of his habitation, use witty inventions, and betake himself to travelling. The last of these remedies is certainly likely to be operative, and Burton might say, in the words of a later philosopher, to willing victims, "Sammy, vy didn't you try an *alibi*?" But a return to the loved object is apt to awaken the slumbering fires, and then wise counsel may be of service, if it be followed. The faults of men and women are so numerous as to make happiness in love extremely problematical. Marriage is encumbered with many miseries, though a happily married couple live a life of supreme bliss. Burton lays most of the faults of unhappiness in wedlock with unchivalrous ferocity upon the gentler sex, though he does apologize for the severity of his strictures upon women, and asserts that his criticisms apply with equal force to men. After briefly discussing the use and abuse of philtres and magical incantations, he rounds off this section with the wise remark that it is best for lovers to "let them have their desire," for nothing else will cure them.³ This is indeed to give up the solution of the problem to the tender mercies of nature, of whom the poet sings:

"Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurrit."

Jealousy next employs Burton's attention, and he describes its evil effects with much force and no small truth. Even animals are subject to its tyrannical sway, and in

¹ Part. III. Sect. III. Memb. iv. pp. 499-537.

² *Idem ibidem*, Memb. v. pp. 537-539. N.B.—There are two Membs. iii. in the fifth edition. The Members are, therefore, correctly numbered in the notes.

³ *Idem*, Sect. II. Memb. vi. pp. 540-590.

man its arises both before and after marriage. Its causes are idleness, impotency, long absence, beauty and wantonness. In the midst of his description of those women who are its victims, he remarks: "Some say red-headed women, pale-coloured, black-eyed, and of a shrill voice, are most subject to jealousy.

"High colour in a woman choler shows,
Naught are they, peevish, proud, malicious;
But worst of all red, shrill and jealous."

"Comparisons are odious; I neither parallel them with others, nor debase them any more; men and women are both bad, and too subject to this pernicious infirmity."¹ This would seem to be the first place in which the familiar proverb is used in English. Whose the verses are by which it is preceded it is hard to say, but they are sufficiently unrhythmical, though undoubtedly to the point.² The symptoms of jealousy are numerous and easily perceptible. It may show itself in unnecessary fear, sorrow and suspicion. It may cause the jealous husband to have recourse to the feeble protection of the lock and key, and he may easily betray himself by foolish private signals to his wife. Its *prognostics*—that is, the evil results which it portends—are despair, madness, suicide and murder.³ That there is some truth in this pessimistic statement may be seen from the terrible stories preserved by John Reynolds in his *Triumphs of God's Revenge against Murder*, and by Thomas Beard in his *Theatre of God's Judgments*.⁴ Let any one who has any doubts upon the matter read the foregoing works, and he will both improve his knowledge and admit his error.

But, terrible as are the results of jealousy, there are some cures which may be used with advantage. The first is set down with considerable naïvety—namely, to avoid occasions of jealousy; and when this has been successfully employed, the patient is warned to beware of idleness, to be of good counsel, and to despise his tormentor. Some of Plato's suggestions are also quoted

¹ Part. III. Sect. III. Memb. i. Subsect. 2, pp. 597, 598.

² *Idem ibidem*, pp. 608–613.

³ *Idem ibidem*, Memb. iii. pp. 613, 614.

⁴ John Reynolds, a London merchant, first published his work in *three books*, in quarto, in 1622. The second edition, in folio in *six books*, appeared in 1635. The work was probably a translation of some foreign book. Thomas Beard first published his book, in quarto, in 1597. It is remarkable as containing an account of the death of Marlow.

from the *Republic*, to be passed over as unsatisfactory, such as the community of wives and marriage with a courtesan. In their place Burton offers the wise advice to all the victims of love of suitable marriage, in which there is an equality of years and fortune, and as far as possible of family and education. When a good wife of this kind has been found, the fortunate husband is warned to "use her well."¹ That this last is the only satisfactory cure of jealousy will be freely admitted both by the casual investigator and the victim himself. That it will always achieve its end must remain doubtful, since a jealous woman is a stubborn patient, and a jealous man is in a still more hopeless plight. He is at all times a contemptible object, and it is just this sense of his own inferiority which renders him an untractable patient. He cannot see that he is sick unto death, and the physician can do but little to relieve him of his self-inflicted torture.

The last section of the *Anatomy* treats of one of the most grievous of all mental ailments, which is known as *religious melancholy*, and which to-day is an important contributor to the lunatic asylum. The object by which it is excited is said to be the influence of the beauty and allurements of the perfection of God, and it is much increased by superstitious beliefs and practices. The devil is the cause of the ailment, and Burton remarks, "Where God hath a temple the devil will have a chapel," a sentiment which is echoed in a slightly more extended form by Daniel Defoe's celebrated couplet at the beginning of his satire entitled *The True-born Englishman*:

"Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The devil surely builds a chapel there."²

The devil acts by means of priests, politicians, heretics, simplicity, fear, ignorance, fasting, solitude, and the familiar weapons of the Church of Rome, which Burton hated only less than the devil himself. Most contemptuously he refers to the *Bull-bellowing Pope*, and throughout this section he uses all the force of his own unstinted

¹ Part. III. Sect. III. Memb. iv. pp. 614-632.

² This pungent satire was published in 1701, in quarto, and was originally written in the interests of the Dissenters. But Defoe, as was commonly his fate, pleased neither party, and suffered severely for his wit. He may have been deliberately borrowing from Burton (p. 640), for he was a learned man.

vocabulary, aided by copious quotation, to set forth his hatred in choice, though exaggerated, phraseology. The Puritans were included no less under his comprehensive ban, and he hits out at both of these strongly opposed sections of the Church universal in his description of the symptoms of religious melancholy. These he affirms to be devotion to a peculiar sect, obstinacy, bigotry, blind obedience, and similar manifestations of intolerance, which cover his own case exactly. Religious melancholy leads to such outward mortifications as fasting and its concomitants of asceticism; and its cure is the breaking of images, the abandonment of sects, and the seeking of refuge in that small branch of the Church of God known as the English Church as by law established. Such are instances of religious melancholy in excess.¹

But the same terrible sickness shows itself by defect of the religious sentiment, and is displayed in the persons of epicures, atheists, hypocrites, philosophers, and deists, each of which class of unfortunates Burton lashes with contemptuous fury. Their views lead them straight into despair, which is caused furthermore by the devil, by melancholy, by excessive meditation, by rigid ministers and by guilty consciences. The end of these *symptoms of despair* is atheism and blasphemy, as indeed these have been its beginning; and its cure may be achieved by physic, good counsel and comforts.² Burton thus arrives at an end of his book, which he concludes with the following fine passage: "Last of all, if the party affected shall certainly know this malady to have proceeded from too much fasting, meditation, precise life, contemplation of God's judgments (for the devil deceives many by such means) in that other extreme he circumvents melancholy itself, reading some books, treatises, hearing rigid preachers, &c. If he shall perceive that it hath begun first from some great loss, grievous accident, disaster, seeing others in like case, or any such terrible object, let him speedily remove the cause, which to the cure of this disease Navarrus (Tom. ii. Cap. 27, Num. 282) so much commends, *avertat cogitationem a re scrupulosa* by all opposite means, art and industry; let him *laxare animum* by all honest recreations, refresh and recreate his distressed soul; let him direct his thoughts by himself

¹ Part. III. Sect. IV. Memb. i. pp. 632-683.

² *Idem ibidem*, Memb. ii. pp. 683-722.

and other of his friends. Let him read no more such tracts or subjects, hear no more such fearful tones, avoid such companies, and by all means open himself, submit himself to the advice of good physicians and divines, which is *contraventio scrupulorum*, as he (Navarrus) calls it; hear them speak to whom the Lord hath given the tongue of the learned, to be able to minister a word to him that is weary, whose words are as flagons of wine (Isa. l. 4). Let him not be obstinate, headstrong, peevish, wilful, self-conceited (as in this malady they are), but give ear to good advice, be ruled and persuaded; and no doubt such good counsel may prove as prosperous to his soul as the angel was to Peter, that opened the iron gates, loosed his bands, brought him out of prison, and delivered him from bodily thralldom; they may ease his afflicted mind, relieve his wounded soul, and take him out of the jaws of hell itself. I can say no more or give better advice to such as are any way distressed in this kind than what I have given and said. Only take this for a corollary, as thou tenderest thine own welfare in this, and all other melancholy, thy good health of body and mind, observe this short precept: give not way to solitariness and idleness. *Be not solitary, be not idle.*"

“SPERATE MISERI,

CAVETE FELICES.

*Vis a dubio liberari, vis quod incertum est evadere? Age pœnitentiam dum sanus es; sic agens, dico tibi quod securus es, quod pœnitentiam egisti eo tempore quo peccare potuisti (Austin)."*¹

So ends Burton's famous *Anatomy of Melancholy*, which he compiled to cure himself of his own ailment. A more learned book, in spite of the fact that it is in essence a cento, does not exist in any language. The author was endowed with considerable humour, which enabled him to use his authorities in the main with much judgment; and the extent of his reading causes the student of to-day wondering astonishment. How far he was serious in his plan of supporting the veriest commonplaces by a host of authorities is uncertain. But the

¹ *Anatomy*, pp. 722, 723.

careful reader of what is really Burton's own will probably come to the conclusion that he did not take the name of *Democritus Junior* in vain, and that he was often smiling grimly as he wrote. The method of the book will have been seen from the foregoing summary, which has been based on a careful reading of its contents. It would have been easy merely to have copied out the headings of his partitions, sections, members and subsections ; but small justice could have been done, either to the author or to his book, by any such superficial process. As it is, it has been impossible to convey to the reader the wonderful amount of varied and well-arranged learning which is to be found on every page of the *Anatomy*. No book bears closer resemblance to the works of *marginal Prynne* ; quotations from every source fill the pages and overflow on to the margins, and the golden thread which binds them together is in most cases plainly perceptible. At times it is worn to extreme thinness by the straining of the connection, which may have been close enough in Burton's mind, but which is less evident to that of his readers. Most of the quotations from the Greek authors are translated into Latin for the benefit of students who were versed in only one tongue besides their own. Fathers, physicians, divines, poets, sacred and profane, philosophers, statesmen, orators, dialecticians, men of science—in short, all the learned men of England and Europe, ancient and of his own time—supply him with quotations and illustrations. It was Burton's habit to drive home a point by using the weight of many authorities who supported, or who seemed to support, his contentions for the time being. Nay, when he is asserting some incontrovertible proposition, he cites his authorities, who are always respectable, to emphasize the truth of something which no one in his senses could deny.

However melancholy he was by nature, he must have pictured to himself with a grim satisfaction the reader wading through his stream of quotations, and sometimes vainly endeavouring to bottom his meaning. His own thoughts, when he peeps through the serried ranks of his authorities, are sober, sound, wise, pointed in expression, and reaching sometimes an elevation and beauty of language which are very captivating. If his book is not original in the greater part of its details, the careful and elaborate plan on which it is constructed is in the highest

degree original. The design is carefully drawn and filled in with long patience and scrupulous care. Having made his skeleton, Burton amuses himself in covering it with the flesh and blood of his own sturdy and robust thought, while he is busied in tricking it out with choice sentences and sentiments from every possible source. Many scholars have been indebted to him for a display of unreal learning, and Sterne¹ has borrowed whole passages and many ideas from his solitary predecessor. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is a great book; it is great in size, consisting of eight hundred folio pages, great in learning, as those who have read it will admit; great in its ground-plan; and beyond measure great in its melancholy. In spite of the occasional flashes of bright humour, in spite of the manly piety, in spite of the unsparing satire of contemporary follies, the tone is pathetic and despairful in the extreme. The author's own besetting sadness throws a glamour of profound melancholy over the whole of his work. The reader feels that *Democritus Junior* saw life through dark spectacles, and he recognises at least as much of Heraclitus, the *weeping philosopher*, as of Democritus, his laughing rival. But with all his melancholy Burton has left a monument of learning, arranged with no small genius and compacted together with a skill which defies imitation. If his famous book be little read to-day, in a somewhat superficial, but sufficiently self-conceited age, it is an indisputable fact that the *Anatomy of Melancholy* is unique in the literature of the world.

Alas! poor Burton, he could not cure himself, and his death was a sorrowful conclusion to a solitary life. Formed by nature for family affection, he was oppressed by hereditary melancholy to such an extent that he is generally supposed to have hanged himself. Be this as it may, and where there is no positive evidence, no positive pronouncement will be made, he lived a lonely life, jealously avoiding company, though fitted to shine in company. That he was the poorer by his excessive shyness cannot be doubted; but it is no less certain that English literature and English scholars too have benefited by his hermit-like existence. Let the thieves who have stolen alike his learning and his ideas give back their pillage, or at least acknowledge its source, and many a reputation for scholarship will fade into obscurity. Let the idle readers of

¹ Ferriar, *Illustrations of Sterne*, 1812.

fragmentary hodge-podges, which are dignified by the name of journals, turn aside from the study of unprofitable orts and ends to read the great work of Robert Burton, and they will perceive what a man could do who devoted himself to learning for its own sake. But it is hopeless to commend to the many, even of the so-called cultured classes, the perusal of a work which entails some trouble and much time. The culture is often skin-deep; and when the thinly laid on gilding is scraped off the original clay appears. For such the *Anatomy of Melancholy* is a closed book; but let them not claim the possession of culture until they have given up the empty study of fragmentary trifles and attempted to understand the bare meaning of the word. Until they have attained this necessary piece of self-knowledge Burton is not for them. But where the superficial fail, the scholar steps in and rejoices in the old worthy, whose learning was both vast and curious, and who knew how to use it to achieve an undying reputation. A melancholy man he lived, a man of one book he passed away, and his book remains to excite the wonder and admiration of the men who have lived after him. Now, perchance, he has laid aside his melancholy in the quiet of eternity; let him rest in peaceful tranquility, now that the long sadness of his lonely life on earth is over.

“Experience, like a pale musician, holds
 A dulcimer of patience in his hand,
 Whence harmonies we cannot understand,
 Of God’s will in His worlds, the strain unfolds
 In sad perplexèd minors; deathly colds
 Fall on us while we hear, and countermand
 Our sanguine heart back from the fancy-land
 With nightingales in visionary wolds.
 We murmur, ‘Where is any certain tune
 Or measured music in such notes as these?’
 But angels, leaning from the golden seat,
 Are not so minded; their fine ear hath won
 The issue of completed cadences,
 And, smiling down the stars, they whisper—‘Sweet.’”¹

¹ E. B. Browning, *Perplexed Music*.

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